

## STRANGWAYS, YOU'VE BEEN HELL TO ME

The biggest rebellion in the history of British prisons took place in Manchester in 1990 >>Pages 10&11



## HOW THE RICH RUN BRITAIN

Raymie Kiernan explains who really wields influence >>Pages 14&15



# Socialist Worker

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# DON'T GET FLEECE BY THE TORIES



# VOTE

## TUSC AGAINST CUTS

### WE HAVE to kick the Tories out.

Don't let them pull the wool over your eyes. The sheer scale of the cuts they've got planned will fleece workers. But Labour just sheepishly follows their austerity and racism. That's why Socialist Worker supports the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) as a left alternative. Vote TUSC in May—and build workers' resistance to get rid of the rotten flock.

### CONFERENCE

## Teachers in NUT union vote for strike ballot

Teachers have unanimously backed a plan to ballot for strikes to stop massive education funding cuts.

NUT union members met in Harrogate last weekend for the union's annual conference.

It was dominated by the fact that schools face a battering whichever party wins May's general election.

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### HILLSBOROUGH

## Cops searched for evidence to blame the dead

POLICE OFFICERS tried to "raise the profile of evidence which blamed the fans" in the wake of the Hillsborough disaster, inquests have heard.

Former deputy chief constable Peter Hayes agreed officers were looking "for evidence adverse to the supporters".

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### KENYA

## Kenya bombs Somalia after campus killings

STUDENTS marched through Kenya's capital Nairobi on Tuesday of this week, after Al Shabaab militants killed 148 in Garissa University college. Many more were critically wounded.

Kenya bombed Somalia in response.

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## THE THINGS THEY SAY

**'You take care of the workers and we'll take care of the bosses'**

A Tory minister to Lib Dem Danny Alexander

**'One was found to be a member of the shop workers union Usdaw. Her Twitter page describes her as a single parent'**

The Daily Mail newspaper reveal the shocking truth about a signatory to a pro-Labour letter

**'I'm now set to Defcon f\*\*\*\*d. I'm expecting to leave and never come back. It's over'**

A Scottish Labour MP looks on the bright side

**'Marlboro Reds too manly for your lady lungs, Jeremy?'**

Mail columnist Sarah Vine finds an unusual reason to have a go at Jeremy Clarkson

**'Hurling insults from behind the safety of their screens'**

Vine complaining about people not being nice, this time about a documentary on teenagers



# 103 fat cat reasons not to vote for the Conservatives

**BOSSES WHO** back the Tories in the press are party donors, tax avoiders, firms using zero hours contracts and others accused of blacklisting.

More than 100 fat cats wrote to a right wing newspaper supporting David Cameron's profit-swelling policies.

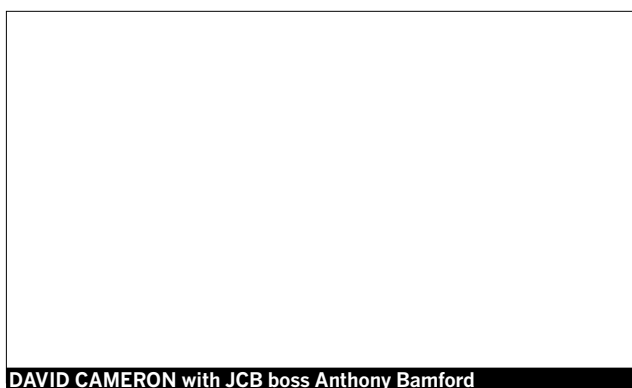
A third of the 103 signatories have ploughed £9 million into the Tory war chest.

Four are Conservative peers and one had Cameron as a wedding guest.

Greene King boss Rooney Anand last year defended a "highly artificial" legal tax avoidance scheme slammed by the courts.

Four other pub and brewery bosses added their names.

Hotel entrepreneur Surinder Arora, is a Tory Party business adviser.



DAVID CAMERON with JCB boss Anthony Bamford

Karren Brady has been handed a peerage under the Tories, along with ex-Marks and Spencer head Stuart Rose and Joanna Shields, the Camerons' "digital adviser".

JCB boss Anthony Bamford also became a peer.

He and his family have pumped £6.3million into Tory coffers.

Others honoured include tycoon John Ayton, property magnate Sir George Jacobescu, jewellery designer Annoushka Ducas, internet tycoon Brent Hoberman and Ted Baker founder Ray Kelvin.

Another signatory, Nick Leslau has injected £14,500 into the Tories.

Carphone Warehouse founder Sir Charles Dunstone has given £5,000 to the party and is a key member of Cameron's Cotswolds set. The PM went to his wedding.

Film director Matthew Vaughn has been entertained by the Tory leader.

Many who put their names to The Daily Telegraph letter earn vast sums. Prudential chief Tidjane Thiam got £11.8 million last year, Whitbread boss Andy Harrison £6.3 million.

Andrew Coppel, of De Vere Hotels, also signed the letter. His company uses zero hours contracts.

Two signatories are linked to firms unions accused of blacklisting workers.

John Morgan is chief executive of Morgan Sindall, while Philip Green is chairman of Carillion.

**NIGEL FARAGE** just can't stop himself. He opined, "I want to live in a community where our kids play football in the streets of an evening." The reason they no longer do, is too many foreigners, apparently. He didn't explain why. Considering the vast playing fields at posh Dulwich School where Farage was educated we doubt he needed to play football in the street in the 1970s.

FA cup—Ukip style

**PATRICK ROCK**, the former Downing Street deputy head of policy, was arrested a year ago and has since been charged with making and possessing indecent photographs of children. All of which he denies. Rock's lawyers have been given a deadline for submitting their defence applications of 8 May—the day after the election.

## Tory scam to give millionaires money

**GEORGE OSBORNE'S** tax breaks for millionaires has saved them £85,000.

His slashing the top rate of tax from 50p to 45p since 2013 means high-rollers on seven-figure salaries have seen their take-home pay swell.

The salaries of business chiefs shows their average pay and perks package last year was £814,000.

That means each saved an average of £33,000—£7,000 more than typical worker earns in a year. The figures show someone on £5 million a year

has a tax cut of £485,000.

**TORY DEFENCE** minister Michael Fallon wants to make it easier for British soldiers to abuse people. He complained of legal claims on an "industrial scale".

Justice secretary Chris Grayling said, "Our boys are hamstrung by human rights laws." The Tories

complain that the Ministry of Defence has paid out £19.3 million in compensation to Iraqis.

On the £8.4 billion for the war—not so bothered.

Slasher Osborne

## Cereal tax avoiders

**THE CEREAL** giant Kellogg's warned shareholders its profits could be hit if tax loopholes are closed.

Kellogg's uses a complex web of companies. Its two main British subsidiaries are owned by an operation based in Ireland, where corporation tax is 12.5 percent, compared with 20 percent here.

Kellogg's effectively paid no corporation tax in Britain in 2013, as payments to HMRC by some of its offshoots were wiped out by tax credits elsewhere. It sells in

Britain through two main subsidiaries owned by Irish-based Kellogg Europe Trading Ltd.

These two subsidiaries paid corporation tax of £8.4 million on profits of nearly £50 million in 2013.

Kellogg's also has six Luxembourg registered companies which collectively paid corporation tax of £210,000 on profits of about £57 million—a rate of 0.37 percent. But this £210,000 and the £8.4 million were offset by an £11.8 million tax credit

## The award for hypocrisy goes...

A **PLAN** to shut the Garshake nursery was included amongst proposed cuts at West Dunbartonshire Council.

The nursery will close on 31 July. A similar story to many councils but the burghers of West Dunbartonshire are a bit special.

The council has entered for the Scottish Top Employers for Working Families Award supported by the Scottish government and the Unison union among others.

It has become a finalist in four of the six categories, including The Best for Childcare Award 2015.

Unison described the council as "hypocritical".



## FAT CAT OF THE WEEK

No. 65347890

**Stephen Phillips**  
Tory MP

● Spent literally hundreds of hours moonlighting as a QC and judge.

● Trousered £2,071,865 since 2010

● He crowed, "The money I earn outside parliament is money for which I work very hard. It also demonstrates really quite how successful I am."

## Lies, damned lies and Tory statistics

**TORY HENRY** Smith has leaflets that say Crawley Hospital "has over 200 new doctors and nurses since 2010". But the NHS trust have pointed out that the 200 increase claim is higher than the total number of doctors and nurses working there.

An email from hospital officials states, "Surrey and Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust (SASH) has a total of 16 Drs and 73 nurses, healthcare assistants and midwives based at Crawley Hospital."

Smith says he got the information from the Minister for health. This just proves you should never trust a Tory.

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# Victory for NHS worker sacked for speaking out

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

**VICTIMISED UNISON union rep and Whipps Cross Hospital worker Charlotte Monro has been reinstated by Barts Health NHS Trust in east London.**

This is a major victory for trade unionists and health workers—and a kick in the teeth for Barts Health's bullying bosses.

Charlotte worked in Whipps Cross as an occupational therapist for 26 years. But bosses sacked her in November 2013 as they were pushing through cuts.

"I spoke out about cuts affecting Whipps Cross stroke unit to Waltham Forest council's health scrutiny committee," Charlotte explained to Socialist Worker.

"I also spoke to staff affected by other job losses about the planned changes of which I had been informed as their union rep.

## Integrity

"Management claimed this 'failed to respect confidentiality'. But I needed to be able to talk to staff in a reps capacity—any union rep with integrity must consult with members."

Bosses then drummed up an excuse of past convictions relating to political protests to justify their attack.

While the Employment Tribunal is still to deliver its final ruling, bosses took a hammering during it.

"Evidence clearly showed that I was acting in my trade union capacity," Charlotte said. "That would mean I was dismissed for undertaking trade union activity, which is against the law."

"But it was also made clear that it was a case of 'protected disclosure', and during the last day of the tribunal they withdrew the challenge to that," Charlotte said.

These two issues were at the heart of Charlotte's case—and of bigger



OUTSIDE CHARLOTTE'S tribunal earlier this year

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

significance as the Tories and bosses try to clamp down on trade union rights.

"Employers are increasingly using a 'failure to respect disclosure' to go for union reps—Candy Udwin is a case in point," said Charlotte, referring to victimised PCS union rep Candy Udwin (see page 19).

"If this action by an employer was

to go unchallenged and they were able to treat trade union activity as 'personal misconduct', that would be a really dangerous precedent.

"It's crucial the Trust and the unions work as equals on these issues—not just the employer asserting that something is confidential."

Her reinstatement comes just as the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

slammed Barts Health for running Whipps Cross into the ground and placed the hospital into "special measures".

The report made clear that a "culture of bullying and harassment" and the "decision to remove 220 posts across the trust and down band several hundred more nursing staff" were to blame.

Management's austerity drive was due to a ballooning debt from Private Finance Initiative (PFI) deals that caused the trust's deficit to rocket to £93 million.

Sacking Charlotte was clearly aimed at weakening the union and stifling resistance.

Bosses began disciplinary action against Charlotte two weeks before revealing the full extent of the Trust's debt.

## Crucial

Charlotte said, "It's crucial that when people speak out or challenge management, they know they aren't turned on for doing so."

Charlotte's reinstatement can strengthen the fightback.

"Unison's legal support and the support I had from my own union branch, the local health campaigns and other unions was really important."

"That's what gave me the strength to get through, and why people saw the bigger significance of my case."

Charlotte's victory should be used to build the resistance against attacks in Barts Health and across the NHS.

"To me, it shows that no matter how difficult it seems to challenge injustice, with support, you can succeed."

"I hope my case will support other reps in a similar position and give a message that the rights of the union rep must be respected."

## What's your story?

Email with your ideas  
reports@socialistworker.co.uk

# Detention protester put in segregation

A DETAINEE who took part in protests at the Verne immigration detention centre in Dorset last month is being held in segregation.

The detainee, Haile, told Socialist Worker, "I've been in a seg from Friday. I think they will take me to a different detention centre or prison."

He spoke to Socialist Worker last month after a desperate detainee had jumped off the roof.

Though the man was not injured his protest led to a demonstration inside the Verne.

"The guy that jumped has been moved to Winchester prison," Haile said.

The authorities appear to be dealing with a country-wide spat

## BACK STORY

**Detainees protested in a number of immigration detention centres last month**

- Many detainees are refugees who have been denied asylum
- The protests were over poor conditions, fast track deportation and being held indefinitely
- Detainees went on hunger strike at the Harmondsworth detention centre near Heathrow
- Other protests were held at most of Britain's ten detention centres
- See Socialist Worker's report at [socialistworker.co.uk/art/40189/D](http://socialistworker.co.uk/art/40189/D)

of detention centre protests by speeding up deportations and dispersing protesters to other centres.

Haile said that six people were moved out immediately after the protest. "We've tried to ring their mobiles, but they've been switched off. Ringing people is the only way to find out what has happened to them."

He is glad he spoke out because people need to "know what they're doing to non-British citizens".

But he is being held indefinitely and worries about his family, "After all these years hoping to see my kids grow, I don't know if I'll ever spend one day with them again."

Ken Olende

## IN BRIEF

### IPCC look into driver death

THE INDEPENDENT Police Complaints Commission is to investigate the death of a driver who crashed after being pursued by police in Birmingham.

The 26 year old died on Wednesday of last week.

### Black Panther in hospital

IMPRISONED FORMER Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal has been in intensive care after collapsing. Supporters want to know why he was not given adequate medical care in jail in Philadelphia.

Mumia has been held since 1982 for the murder of a policeman. He has always maintained his innocence.

### Council tax rise hits poor

SOME 3 million people in England were in court over council tax arrears last year after the Tories scrapped benefits that meant the poorest didn't pay.

Some 250,000 poor families saw bills go up last week as councils introduced minimum payments.

### Abuse victim links sites

RICHARD KERR, a victim of abuse at Kincora Boys' Home in Belfast, said he was also attacked at the Dolphin Square apartments and Elm Guest House in London.

This is first time that the three places have been linked in relation to claims of historic child abuse by Westminster figures.

## Socialist Worker

### MAY DAY GREETINGS



To celebrate May Day, Socialist Worker prints solidarity messages from readers, trade union branches, SWSS groups and campaigns. The deadline to get your message into Socialist Worker is **Wednesday 15 April**

[mayday@socialistworker.co.uk](mailto:mayday@socialistworker.co.uk)

## IN THIS WEEK

# 1981

### Police spark riot in Brixton

PEOPLE IN Brixton, south London, rose up against police racism and harassment.

Police had stopped and searched almost 950 people in the days before.

They sparked a riot after arresting a black man stabbed in a fight.





# No let up in SNP surge looks grim for Labour

The Scottish National Party is benefitting from the desire for an alternative, writes Raymie Kiernan

**THE NEW** reality of electoral politics in Britain has put the smaller parties in the spotlight. For the first time, a television debate had seven party leaders taking part.

The revulsion towards the established parties after five years of brutal Tory austerity means many people are looking towards an alternative.

Scottish National Party (SNP) leader Nicola Sturgeon has continued her pitch for the anti-austerity vote. This comes off the back of a surge in new members and Labour's near collapse in Scotland.

Her party is certain to have some say in the next government.

She has called on Labour to join with the SNP to stop another Tory government.

Many who tuned into the leaders' debate will have understood why the political landscape in Scotland has undergone such a dramatic shift.

## Bitterness

The same bitterness at corrupt, lying politicians and their lack of interest in working class living standards exists everywhere.

So it is refreshing for people to hear a mainstream politician say migrants are welcome here, nuclear weapons are a waste of money and austerity must end.

## BACK STORY

**Support for Scottish Labour has collapsed since the independence referendum last year**

●The Yes campaign gathered huge support from working class people looking for an alternative to austerity

●But the Labour party lined up with the Tories to campaign for a No vote

●Polls show Labour could lose all but a handful of their Westminster MPs in Scotland

The SNP claimed over 2,000 new members within 24 hours of the leaders' debate.

And its membership has quadrupled since last year's independence referendum—making it the third largest party in Britain.

The feeling that it offers an alternative to rotten decay at Westminster has only intensified.

This is despite the SNP implementing cuts in local councils and in government (see below) and only calling for “a modest rise in real terms spending”—continuing cuts.

For months the SNP has consistently been shown in polls to be



SNP SUPPORTERS march against nuclear weapons in Glasgow last week

heading for something close to a landslide win. They currently have six seats in the House of Commons.

A seemingly unstoppable momentum will see the SNP emerge with the majority of Westminster MPs in Scotland.

## Grim

Meanwhile things are looking grim for Labour in Scotland. Labour figures celebrated a poll last week that showed only 28 of its Scottish seats would be lost.

For some Labour MPs it's all

getting a bit too much to bear.

With less than a week to go until all candidates had to be declared Dundee West MP Jim McGovern announced he was withdrawing, citing ill health.

And the bad news continued for the party's new Blairite leader Jim Murphy.

His new Labour strategists argue around 190,000 independence supporters who have never voted SNP are crucial to preventing a wipe-out in May.

Most are men over 40 living

within 25 miles of Glasgow.

As part of his pitch for their vote Murphy has called for an end to a 35-year old ban on the sale of alcohol at Scottish football stadiums.

He just forgot to mention the best man at his wedding is a top lobbyist for the drinks industry.

With opposition like this, the SNP is getting an easy ride.

## On other pages...

The election candidates fighting for a socialist alternative >>>Page 6

# Scottish colleges suffer from funding cuts

A PUBLIC spending watchdog report released last week revealed Scottish National Party (SNP) austerity in action. Audit Scotland's findings on further education colleges shows there are now fewer students, fewer staff and less money.

Student numbers have dropped 36 percent since 2008/09 and teaching staff was cut 9.2 percent in the last two years alone. Budgets were down £69 million between 2011/12 and 2015/16.

The SNP has disguised its cuts through college mergers, reducing the overall number from 37 to 20.

lecturers' union said that “is simply wrong”. It criticised the report as being “mainly from a management perspective”.

The SNP wants to cut £50 million a year from 2015/16 while talking about protecting and enhancing learning and teaching.

The fact the report reveals “there are no systems in place” to measure the impact of the mergers shows it was just about cuts.

The SNP should be held accountable on their record—not just on their sound bites for the press or TV debates.

Yet Audit Scotland concludes there's been “minimal negative impact on students”. The EIS

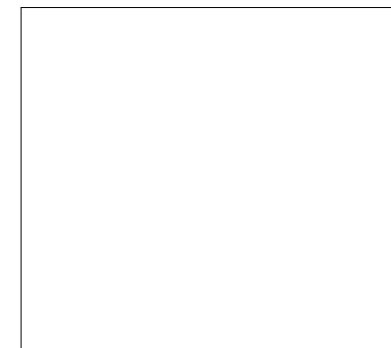
# Kingston protesters challenge Clegg

NICK CLEGG faced a noisy protest in Kingston, west London, when he went to campaign for Lib Dem MP Ed Davey on Monday of this week.

Activists from the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC), which is standing candidates across the country, heckled Clegg on his walkabout.

They chanted “Nick Clegg lied to me—he said uni would be free”.

Gabby Thorpe is planning to stand as a TUSC candidate in the



Nick Clegg was hounded in Kingston

Kingston Council by-election for Grove ward.

She told Socialist Worker, “Nick Clegg thought he could come and campaign where there would be no resistance. We came to say that it's not ok for him to prop up a Tory government that has attacked working class people.”

# Don't believe Farage's racist healthcare lies

UKIP LEADER Nigel Farage has said that he would rather people became poorer than have migrants coming to live in Britain.

His racist rants have attracted another Tory defector—Hull councillor and until last week the party's parliamentary candidate, Mike Whitehead.

That's why Farage made a nasty attack during the leaders' debate on people who are not born in Britain and receive NHS treatment for the HIV virus.

In fact 62 percent of people newly infected with the HIV virus in 2012 were born in Britain.

Even a House of Commons report undermines Farage's lies. It said that most of those not born in Britain who went to the NHS for treatment for the virus only discovered they were infected after living in Britain for some years.

In 2012 a rule change allowed free treatment to anyone who was found to be HIV positive

regardless of their nationality in the interest of public health.

Farage's comment was not a slip up.

It was a calculated move to play on people's fears about cuts and funding for the NHS and other public services but to place the blame on immigrants.

The polls for Farage's own seat in South Thanet, Kent show it is a close fight. Stand up to Ukup campaigners will be out on the streets there and across Britain for two national days of action on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 April.

Bring your friends, workmates and union and campaign banners and send in reports of your activity to [reports@socialistworker.co.uk](mailto:reports@socialistworker.co.uk). Activists will also be leafletting train stations in London and elsewhere where commuters travel through to areas that Ukup is targeting.

Judith Orr

For more info go to [standuptoukip.org](http://standuptoukip.org)

## Socialist Worker WHAT WE THINK

# ELECTION SPIN MISSES ALL OF THE REAL ISSUES

**P**OLITICIANS PUSH a different issue everyday in the election campaign. Yet they rarely reflect the real lives and concerns of millions of working class people battered by years of Tory austerity.

The Tories made much of their move to allow pensioners to open their “pension pots” on Monday of this week.

The media was full of stories of pensioners choosing to buy sports cars or go on luxury cruises with the money the Tories had allowed them to access.

How do the Tories have the gall to boast about allowing pensioners to make choices about their pensions?

They are the ones who are responsible for snatching pension rights from millions of public sector workers.

These workers will have no fat pension pot to dip into when they reach old age, thanks to the Tories.

When it comes to the housing crisis we hear lots of politicians promising to build thousands of new homes if they win in May.

It sounds good, but no one explains how young people on low wages, perhaps zero hour contracts,

will ever be able to afford them.

The Tories have set the agenda, racist Ukup is dragging it further to the right, and Labour is not standing up to them. No wonder so many people are cynical about official politics.

As if that wasn't enough then Tony Blair reappears. The intervention of this multimillionaire warmonger and on-call advisor to dictatorial regimes only confirms Labour's distance from the concerns of working class people.

Blair cannot help get out the anti-Tory vote. This is a man who led Britain into an illegal imperialist invasion of Iraq, a war

**Workers will have no fat pension pot to dip into when they reach old age**

# NO FREEDOM IN YARMOUK

**S**OME 18,000 Palestinians are trapped in the Yarmouk refugee camp in the Syrian capital Damascus, as battles rage between Bashar al-Assad's regime and Isis.

The history of Yarmouk shows how the suffering of the Palestinians has been shaped by imperialism in the Middle East.

The camp was set up in 1957 to house refugees who had been expelled from their homes in Palestine after the creation of the state of Israel in 1948.

It has since grown into a vast,

impoverished slum.

Palestinians in Yarmouk rose up against the Assad regime as part of the Syrian revolution in 2011.

They protested against regime-affiliated groups inside the camp. And they took in Syrians fleeing government repression.

The regime responded by laying siege to the camp, pounding it with barrel bombs.

The dire conditions caused by the assault forced most of the camp's residents to flee—its population falling from around 200,000 to 18,000 today.

whose effects are still being felt by the people there today.

Even some of his own party's parliamentary candidates in marginal seats refused a £1,000 donation from him as he was seen as too toxic.

Socialists are standing in seats across Britain to offer an alternative for all those sickened by warmongers and millionaires imposing austerity on the poor.

Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) candidates are working class campaigners and activists. They know most pensioners are more concerned with how to pay their bills than what Lamborghini they might buy.

They argue for a fight to stop the cuts—not how to administer them.

The general election campaign exposes the basic consensus that there is among all the mainstream politicians.

They all argue austerity is inevitable, and they all use racist scapegoating of migrants to deflect blame for what the cuts have done to working class living standards.

The need for the left to organise and build a united alternative is greater than ever.

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## ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



## Middle East states in regional power play

**FOUR YEARS** after the risings in Tunisia and Egypt, the Arab world is caught up in war from neighbouring Libya to Syria and Iraq.

Now a new front has burst out in Yemen, with Saudi Arabia heading up a coalition of Arab states and Pakistan. They have begun intervening in the Yemeni civil war between supporters of president Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi and the rapidly advancing Houthi rebel army.

The Foreign Policy website commented, "A surprising feature of 'Operation Decisive Storm', as the Saudi-led operation in Yemen has been named, is the number and size of reported commitments to the coalition.

"The Saudis are contributing 100 fighter jets, 150,000 soldiers, and some naval units... Egypt is deploying unspecified naval and air force units, and ground forces will be deployed 'if necessary'."

To understand what's happening we have to look at the regional context. All the different wars combine internal antagonisms and proxy struggles among regional powers.

So in Libya, Turkey and Qatar are backing one side, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates the other.

But the biggest conflict pits Saudi Arabia against Iran, the states claiming to represent the Sunni and Shiite wings of Islam respectively.

An Iranian MP recently boasted that, thanks to its alliances with Shiite parties, Tehran now dominates three great Arab capitals—Damascus, Baghdad, and Beirut.

The Islamic republican regime has just pulled off a diplomatic coup by agreeing an outline deal with the US and five other "world powers" over Iran's nuclear programme.

Yemen occupies a strategic position on Saudi Arabia's southern border and at the gates to the Red Sea. A rising in 2011 eventually led to the negotiated removal of president Ali Abdullah Saleh.

But forces loyal to him have allied themselves to the Houthi militias, who now control the capital, Sana'a, and the port of Aden. The US military has been forced to abandon the Yemeni base it has been using to mount operations against Al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

### Substantial

The Houthis belong to the Zaidi sect of Shia Islam. Both Yemen and Saudi Arabia have substantial Shia minorities.

The elderly new Saudi king Salman and his minister of defence and favourite son Muhammed are clearly terrified of a Houthi victory. They fear it would spread Iranian influence in Yemen—and potentially within their own borders.

There is another dimension to the conflict. Yemen is important to Egypt as well as Saudi Arabia. During the 1960s the Egyptian nationalist leader Gamal Abdel Nasser waged a proxy war in Yemen against Saudi Arabia in an unsuccessful attempt to overturn the monarchy there.

Foreign Policy website suggests the present Yemeni intervention may mean "Egypt is making a comeback as a regional leader in the Middle East. As Hosni Mubarak aged and his economy creaked, Saudi Arabia effectively added the leadership of the Arab world to its existing status as self-proclaimed leader of the Islamic world.

"This standing accelerated during Mohamed Morsi's chaotic year in power. But since the emergence of president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi—and the geriatric transition in Saudi Arabia, not to mention the collapse in the price of oil—Egypt's claim to be the top dog has strengthened."

This kind of manoeuvring between regional powers has increased with the retreat of direct US intervention after Iraq.

US president Barack Obama has been simultaneously encouraging states such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia to play a larger role and playing them off against each other. The deal with Iran, which infuriates the Saudis and Israel, fits them into this pattern.

But, as George Friedman of the intelligence website Stratfor points out, "this kind of approach is always messy... the US is providing intelligence and mission planning for the Saudi coalition... In Iraq, the United States is providing support to Shiites by bombing Islamic State installations. In Syria, US strategy is so complex that it defies clear explanation."

The danger for Western imperialism is that the mess—and with it the Middle East—escapes anyone's control. Global disorder is spreading.



CAMPAIGNING FOR Tottenham TUSC candidate Jenny Sutton

PICTURE: JENNY SUTTON FOR TOTTENHAM

# Socialist election candidates show there is left alternative

by NICK CLARK

**TRADE UNIONIST and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) election campaigns across Britain are helping build the fightback among people who are looking for an alternative to austerity.**

In Tottenham, north London, TUSC candidate Jenny Sutton's campaign is attracting people who are angry with the local Labour Party-run council's cuts.

Street cleaner Peter Khaihra got involved with Jenny's campaign after meeting her at a recent protest outside Haringey Council.

He told Socialist Worker that he supported Jenny because she was the only one standing up for people in the borough.

### Floating

"I've been a floating voter since 1992. But I can't see myself voting for Labour again," he said.

"Jenny's doing more fighting to save the borough than our Labour MP David Lammy—and he's getting paid.

"I like that she says she'll only take the average workers' wage if elected.

"Hopefully she can give Lammy a bloody nose, and show him that he hasn't got a job for life here—that he's got to stand up for the people in the borough."

In Portsmouth North, TUSC candidate Jon Woods has spent a lot of time canvassing in the working class area of Cosham.

"The positive response we're having with people here is noticeable," he said.

"When they see us out regularly campaigning, lots of them keep coming back to say they're voting for me."

In Edinburgh East, TUSC candidate Ayesha Saleem spoke at a hustings that saw



Gary Kaye

the Labour candidate get heckled from the floor.

She told Socialist Worker, "As a TUSC candidate I got a lot of applause and cheers for standing as a principled socialist against cuts, benefit sanctions, privatisation, racism and war."

### Council

TUSC will also be standing candidates in council elections.

Gary Kaye is the candidate for Horsforth in Leeds. He told Socialist Worker, "Three years ago I stood as a council candidate in the same ward for Labour.

"But I became very disillusioned working within the organisation.

"Labour has never apologised for the Iraq war. And even before the rise of Ukip, Labour was using the race card and blaming migrants."

He added, "Some people have argued, what is the point of TUSC? It isn't going to get into government.

"I'm not in politics simply for what might happen in a few years' time.

"I want to build a left wing movement for the future, not the short term.

"I think people in society can only take so much and then they start to fight back."

## Meet a TUSC candidate

**ANNE LEMON is the TUSC candidate for Bristol North West. She explained to Socialist Worker how she's using her campaign to build resistance to austerity.**

Anne said, "We've concentrated on some of the constituency's most deprived areas."

She said the campaign was tapping into anger at cuts.

"In Bristol the library closures campaign is a big issue," she said.

"The Tory council is trying to sack all the workers and get volunteers in."

"Attacks on the health service have also got people angry.

"They're trying to privatise mental health services and a private hospital has opened in Emerson Green that's not providing services people had before."

Anne explained that many people are disillusioned with mainstream politics.

She said, "Lots of people say they aren't going to vote and that politicians are all the same.

"But TUSC is showing people they don't have to put up with austerity."



**Got a story?**

Email ideas to [reports@socialistworker.co.uk](mailto:reports@socialistworker.co.uk)



# Teachers back calls for strike ballot at NUT union conference

The unanimous vote for a strike ballot shows there's a mood to fight. But the union needs to prepare now for whatever party wins the election. **Sadie Robinson** reports from Harrogate

**TEACHERS HAVE** unanimously backed a plan to ballot for strikes to stop massive education funding cuts.

NUT union members met in Harrogate last weekend for the union's annual conference.

It was dominated by the fact that schools face a battering whichever party wins May's general election.

Delegates who spoke about taxing the rich won applause and calls for Labour to do more than tail the Tories got a good response.

Schools face a 12 percent cut in funding per pupil after the election, regardless of the result, the Institute for Fiscal Studies think tank has estimated.

This would slash £1 out of every £8—and many teachers are already struggling.

Lewis Doig is an early years teacher in Kent. He told Socialist Worker that teachers have to make choices about who they support in lessons as they don't have enough resources.

"You know that children are being abandoned," he said. "It's dreadful. It's driving people nuts."

Lewis said workers' action could stop the attacks.

"The union needs to shape up," he said. "I think if we had had a programme of strike dates in 2011 we would've got somewhere."

## Campaign

The motion said the NUT would ballot "for a national campaign of strike and non-strike action" if talks with the government made "no progress".

Delegates overwhelmingly passed an amendment instructing the executive to organise a ballot if no progress is made "by the time of the autumn statement".

Anne Lemon from the union's national executive committee said, "The cuts are so unprecedented that it starts to signal extraordinary times in education."

"We must let members know we are preparing to fight back."

Some cautioned against making too many plans before the make-up of the government is clear.

Yet Paul McGarr from east London argued, "We face a storm coming in education. We need to start preparing our members."

Over 40 percent of conference backed an "escalating campaign of national strike action" over workload and putting a timetable for action.

This was despite some on the left, including national executive committee (NEC) members, arguing



**DELEGATES CELEBRATE** winning a vote against the Tories' 'baseline tests'

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

against it.

The conference showed teachers' anger about the assault on education.

Turning that anger into action depends on what teachers do on the ground in their schools.

Roz Morton from Sefton NUT told Socialist Worker that strikes are "necessary".

"Some people talk of the difficulties in mobilising members," she said.

"But I know in my school that if we go to teachers with a clear plan of action they will back it."

"They want to know we are fighting to win."

For more on NUT conference, including debates on workload and privatisation [socialistworker.co.uk](http://socialistworker.co.uk)



**On other pages...**

Students occupy campuses over Easter >> page 19

## ANTI-RACISM

### Delegates refuse to spy on pupils

NUT UNION delegates unanimously opposed the Prevent strategy and the promotion of "British values" in schools.

The Tories are using the Prevent strategy to single out black and Asian children as potential "extremists".

Three schools in Barnsley, south Yorkshire, published versions of a "Radicalisation and Extremism Risk Assessment" document on their websites. It's part of Prevent, which schools are expected to implement.

They ask, "Is the school particularly prone to Radicalisation and Extremism?" The answer given is, "No. Cohort of pupils are white British majority."

It adds, "The school conducts an annual remembrance service with the local British Legion."

The report said, "Staff continue to monitor BME cohort."

The reports relate to Holy Trinity, Dearne Advanced Learning Centre and Springwell Learning Community, which runs two schools.

One Muslim teacher from Luton told Socialist Worker, "We've just had an Ofsted inspection and had a mark put against us."

"They said we need to include teaching about 'radicalisation'."

"We as teachers, through the union, should refuse to cooperate with it."

Jan Nielsen from Wandsworth, south London, told conference, "We were identified as a 'tier 1' by the Prevent strategy because we have a high number of Muslim students."

"One boy applied to go to Pakistan to visit his dying grandfather. His laptop was taken from him and he was questioned."

"We need to refuse to be complicit in this."

They agreed to continue to work with campaigning organisations, including Unite Against Fascism (UAF), and welcomed the launch of Stand Up to Ukip.

Delegate Seema McArdle won massive applause when she spoke against the scapegoating of migrants, telling conference, "Blame the Etonians—not the Romanians." There was hissing at the mention of Ukip leader Nigel Farage.

A 200-strong fringe meeting backed by UAF and Stop the War discussed the fight against racism and Islamophobia.

## Boycott new primary tests

**DELEGATES** overwhelmingly backed a boycott of "baseline tests" that the Tories want to force onto four year olds.

They voted to "begin a campaign towards a boycott in the summer term 2015".

Baseline assessments are set to be rolled out in reception classes from September 2016 and the Tories want to trial them this September.

Schools are pressured to choose their tests from six private providers.

Delegates also backed an amendment agreeing that "schools should not take part in the early trial".

A motion instructed

**NUT leaders to work with the Too Much Too Soon campaign and the Charter for Primary Education.**

Paula Champion from Cambridgeshire said the union was sending a clear message to schools. "Do not go for early adoption. Go to your head and say you do not want to do the tests," she said.

But Paula said some teachers felt the union could have done more to lead the fight against early years testing. She said that some felt under pressure to choose a provider for the tests.

"It is unacceptable for our union to leave them in that position," she said.



# Kenya bombs Somalia after university assault kills 148

Kenya's government claims bombing raids are unrelated to Al Shabaab's attack last week but history tells another story, explains Ken Olende

**STUDENTS MARCHED** in Kenya's capital Nairobi on Tuesday of this week, during a third day of national mourning after Al Shabaab militants killed 148 in Garissa University college. Many more were critically wounded.

The attackers took 800 students hostage, and 142 of the dead were students.

The military killed the four militants 15 hours after they stormed the university. Survivors said the gunmen separated out Muslims before shooting others.

The Kenyan airforce bombed Somalia last Sunday and again on Monday. It said that the raid was part of ongoing actions and not a response to Garissa.

Kenya followed Ethiopia in invading Somalia four years ago and has been carrying out regular bombing raids ever since.

## Attacks

The invasion pushed Al Shabaab out of the capital, Mogadishu, but it has kept up a guerrilla war ever since, spreading into terror attacks on Kenya.

Somali eyewitnesses told BBC reporters that civilians were hurt in the air strikes and such attacks are not as damaging to the militants as the Kenyan military makes out.

The university assault is the worst Al Shabaab attack in a continuing wave of violence that has included the 2013 attack on Nairobi's Westgate shopping centre.

Al Shabaab, which now associates itself with Isis, has recruited Kenyans, not just people with Somali backgrounds.

Some see it as an alternative to

## BACK STORY

**Al Shabaab carried out its worst attack in Kenya last week**

● Its assault at a university in the Garissa region, near the border with Somalia, killed 148

● Kenya invaded Somalia in 2011 and has regularly bombed it ever since—the invasion pushed Al Shabaab from the Somali capital

● Some see Al Shabaab as an alternative to Kenya's corrupt Western backed elite

● Somali refugees in Garissa are now facing a backlash

the corruption and greed of Kenya's Western-backed ruling class.

One of the attackers was the son of a Kenyan government official.

Local political leaders in the Garissa region, close to the border with Somalia, have led a backlash against Somali refugees.

Some 335,000 live in the Dadaab refugee camps near the border. Many of these long predate the recent invasion, having fled the Somali civil war or the US attack (see box below).

One local MP said, "They have been with us for the last 20 years.

"I think time has come when the national security of our people becomes more paramount than the international obligations that we have."

He has called for them to be repatriated, though Somalia is still a war zone.

Many other Somalis live in Kenya's towns and cities and the government's anti-terror campaign means they are often treated as terrorists.

## The roots of Al Shabaab

**VARIOUS ISLAMIST** groups arose out of the chaos of the Somali civil war.

In the late 1990s they formed the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC). They set up a rudimentary, albeit brutal, system of government based on existing clan structures overlaid by Sharia courts.

For the first time in a decade there was some kind of stability and beginnings of civil society in the areas run by UIC.

It contained moderates as

well as hardliners. But after 9/11 George W Bush decided that it was the equivalent of Al Qaida and had to be crushed.

The US armed "friendly" warlords to take it on. UIC defeated them. The US then gave the nod to Ethiopia to invade on its behalf in 2006.

They drove UIC out into the bush where some regrouped, returning in a more extreme form as Al Shabaab.

**Hassan Mahamdallie**

Longer version at [socialistworker.co.uk](http://socialistworker.co.uk)

**KENYAN TROOPS** mobilise in the Garissa region after Al Shabaab attack

## GREECE

# Syriza commits to keep paying debts but Euro bullies still withhold bailout

by **DAVE SEWELL**

**THE BLACKMAIL** of Greece's government by its creditors pushed it closer than ever to bankruptcy this week.

Greece was due to pay £335 million to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Thursday, the first of several large payments on its debt this month.

Yet the IMF, eurozone governments and European Central Bank continue to withhold £5.3 billion of bailout money they were due to pay Greece.

They demand tough pro-business "reforms" including attacks on pensions and workers' rights, and the privatisation of state assets. But radical left party

Syriza was elected in January to end such attacks.

Syriza representatives were set to meet eurozone ministers this week with proposals aiming to satisfy both their creditors and their voters.

Facing a brick wall in Europe, Syriza has sought some help elsewhere.

## Loan

China loaned Greece £73 million after its state-backed firm Cosco was encouraged to bid in the privatisation of Piraeus port.

And prime minister Alexis Tsipras was set to make a highly publicised trip to Russia this week.

But Greece's proposals to the eurozone reaffirm its pledge to stay within the European Union no matter what.

And finance minister Yannis Varoufakis told IMF boss Christine Lagarde last Sunday that Greece would keep paying its debts "ad infinitum".

These debts were racked up by the bankers' crisis—and the movements that led the resistance to austerity may not share Varoufakis' willingness to keep paying forever.

Workers sacked under the last government marched in Athens last weekend, with the slogan that workers' demands are "not negotiable".

Pensioners protested against cuts on Wednesday of last week.

And continuing protests against a proposed gold mine in Skouries, northern Greece, lent urgency to MPs' debates about overturning repressive laws.



## Bosses at B&Q lied

B&Q is to close 60 stores across Britain and Ireland, putting 3,000 jobs at risk.

During the Scottish independence referendum B&Q blackmailed voters by threatening to close stores if the Yes campaign won.

Now with a No vote B&Q made their announcement.

This shows how big business manipulated the referendum campaign.

It also highlights how the system is run in favour of the rich and powerful, who don't care about the lives they destroy.

**Ayesha Saleem**

Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition parliamentary candidate for Edinburgh East

## How to fight oppression

THERE MAY be greater numbers of women in the boardroom, but that doesn't mean we're equal.

Capitalism seeks to divide male against female, black against white and gay against straight.

This is so the parasitic elite at the top of society can exploit working class people.

More women being in these powerful roles is a positive development.

But at such a high level of the capitalist class it just means they're involved in the oppression of workers.

It doesn't mean that women don't experience sexism every day.

The fight for equality is a fight for liberation—liberation from the oppressive and divisive ideas that lie at the very heart of capitalism.

**Holly Teal**  
South London

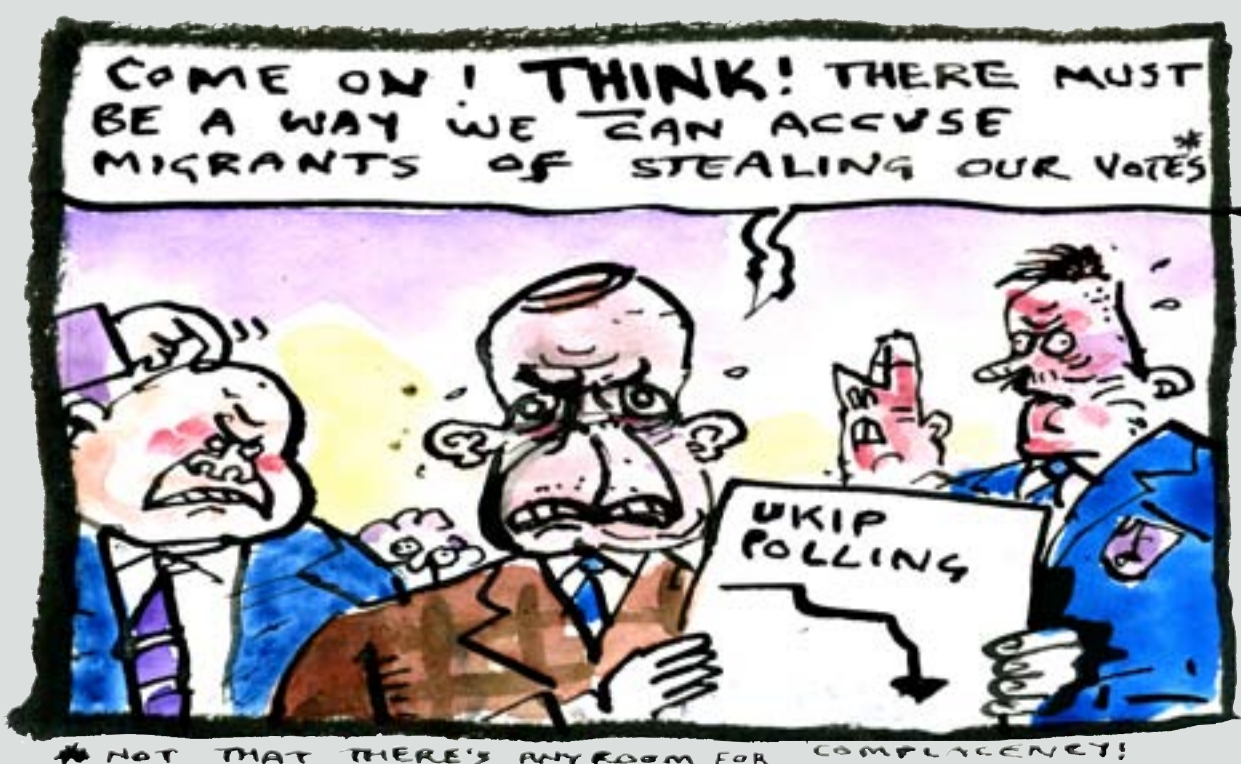


ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

Just a thought...

## Organise to force change

"FORCE IS the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one," wrote Marx in 1867.

The litany of police cover ups—from Hillsborough to Rochdale—works in concert with the mainstream parties' pandering to racism to shore up the One Percent.

The birth of the new society will be shaped by how much we organise our resistance to austerity and racism now.

**Rhett Moran**  
Manchester

## Population is not a problem

DON'T BELIEVE the racist myths about "overpopulation". We could feed and house the world many times over.

The problem is not overpopulation. The problem is capitalism and all the illogical decisions that go with it.

**James Pettefar**  
South London

## Labour makes me sick

PERHAPS Labour would be better off rebranding their "immigration controls" mug as a sick bucket for all those sickened by a party that draws its inspiration from the gutter.

**John Curtis**  
Ipswich

## We need left alternative

I'M WALKING away from my voting habit of a lifetime—Labour.

In these dark and desperate times we're crying out for a left wing alternative to counter the rise of the right.

Pity there's no TUSC candidate in my constituency.

**Dave Westley**  
Newport, South Wales

## Solidarity with Palestine

SUSSEX University students recently voted overwhelmingly to boycott Israeli companies.

There is huge support for Palestinians amongst students. Now more students' unions should do the same.

**Abbie Manning**  
Sussex University

# Dudley is united against the Nazis and Islamophobes

THE REVELATIONS of the former Tory parliamentary candidate for Dudley North foolishly trying to negotiate with and invite the racist English Defence League (EDL) back to Dudley were truly shocking.

They stand in complete opposition to the vast majority of residents in Dudley that did not want the EDL to come and disrupt the town.

Over 100 representatives of different faith groups, trade unions and political parties in Dudley all signed the Unity Statement.

The statement called upon the EDL to keep their racist violence out of Dudley.

What is also shocking is that it has been unreported that over 300

local residents attended a Unity rally organised by Unite Against Fascism, including members of Dudley Central Mosque.

We stood together in unity and solidarity when the EDL march was wrongly allowed to shut Dudley town centre on 7 February earlier this year.

Dudley is a multicultural town that prides itself on having harmonious community relations.

This was shown when the mosque was opened to all, providing free food and drinks.

The most recent person to be given freedom of the Borough is Lenny Henry.

This symbolically shows that racist organisations such as the EDL, or ex-members of the BNP in

Britain First, are not welcome in Dudley.

We believe that all faiths have a right to worship and to a place to carry that out.

Politicians should not use Dudley, nor the desire for one section of Dudley's Muslim community to have a new place of worship, as a political football to divide us.

**Cathy Bayton**

President of Dudley Trades Council

**Tony Barnsley**

Love Music Hate Racism in Dudley

**Martin Lynch**

Dudley National Union of Teachers

**Will Duckworth**

Green Party candidate for Dudley North

**Paul Singh**

Dudley Sikhs Against the EDL

## Labour should stop its attacks on migrants

AS A member of the Labour Party, I want to speak out against Labour's "immigration controls" mug.

I've fought in the trade union movement for migrant workers' rights.

Immigrants and migrant workers—along with other groups such as disabled workers—have always been a handy scapegoat.

But where I live there are lots of people from all kinds of different backgrounds. There are Asians, Muslims,

Somalis, Polish. They're not going to be attracted by anti-immigration.

Some in Labour are worried about the SNP and the Greens—really we should be challenging Ukip on its racism.

I'll still be voting Labour in the general election. But we should be talking about things like building more social housing—not attacking migrants.

**Raj Gill**

West London

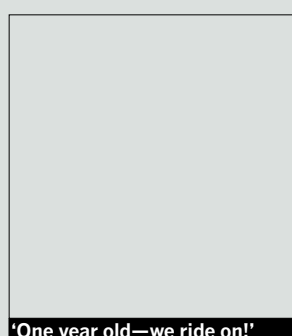
## Celebrating a year of Freedom Riders

SOUTH Yorkshire Freedom Riders celebrated one year of campaigning to win back free train travel for older people with a protest in Barnsley last week.

We lost free travel because Labour councillors passed on Tory spending cuts.

More than 100 disabled and older people were joined by trade unionists while we marched through the Barnsley Transport Interchange.

Our rally applauded the campaign's successes—



'One year old—we ride on!'

winning back free train travel for disabled people and half fares for older people.

A range of speakers from different trade unions and the Yorkshire National Pensioners Convention pledged their continued support. The president of train drivers' union Aslef, Tosh McDonald, said they were fully behind us.

I spoke for the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition and we raised lots of money for my election campaign.

**Dave Gibson**

Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition parliamentary candidate for Barnsley Central



# STRANGeways YOU’VE BEEN HELL TO ME

The biggest rebellion in the history of British prisons took place in Strangeways in Manchester in 1990. Annette Mackin retells the story

**TWENTY FIVE years ago some 300 inmates gathered in the chapel of Strangeways prison in Manchester for an Easter morning service.**

Noel Proctor, a former police officer turned Church of England chaplain, was overseeing the service. As he rose to thank a visiting army preacher for his sermon about redemption and forgiveness, a prisoner stood up and grasped the pulpit microphone.

The inmate was Paul Taylor. He knew the misery of life inside and prison officers' brutality only too well.

Taking hold of the microphone he said, "I would just like to say, right, that this man has just talked about the blessing of the heart and a hardened heart can be delivered. No it cannot. Not with resentment, anger and bitterness and hatred being instilled in people."

As the congregation began

shouting and cheering, he said, "Fuck your system, fuck your rules."

More prisoners began to join in and within minutes they had control of Strangeways. It was the start of the biggest uprising in British penal history.

Prisoners grabbed keys from officers, who quickly withdrew, and began unlocking cells. Others opened doors with iron bars and fire extinguishers.

One remand prisoner recalled, "When I looked out of the spy hole in the door I saw lads running all over the place. Some had masks on and others were wearing prison officers' uniforms."

Hundreds made their way onto the roof of the prison. Many later spoke of the exhilaration of being free from the prison walls and being able to see the city.

Prisoners sat on the roof until the early hours, talking and listening to a radio that had been wired up to a loudspeaker in the chapel.

Officers who had retreated to the prison car park tried to provoke a reaction by trading insults with the protesters on the roof.

Alan Lord, one of the first onto the

roof, said, "Many were gesticulating and shouting, telling me they were going to break my arms and legs. I shouted back, 'Who's got your prison now?'"

Most of the inmates in Strangeways were from poor, working class areas of Manchester.

Many, like Alan, had also been in the care system as children.

Tensions had been mounting in the prison for a long time before they finally exploded that Easter morning.

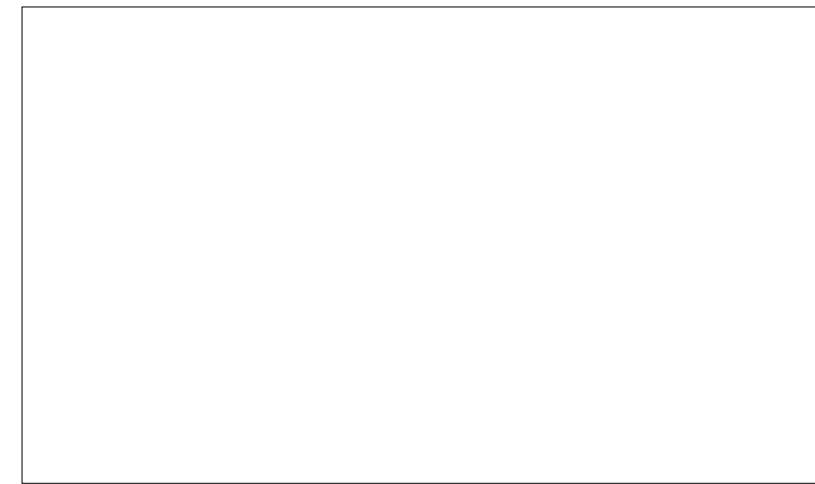
The conditions in the jail were dirty and dark. High security category A unit prisoners never saw the sun. Their cells were designed facing north west so that it never shone in. The exercise yard had covers over it.

Inmates were locked in their cells for 23 hours a day. They were only let out for the hated "slopping out", where a toilet bucket was emptied, a weekly shower or hour-long exercise.

On top of this was the routine humiliation and brutality by prison officers.

The idea for a protest against the repression had its origins in the punishment block about a week earlier—and there had been some limited action.

But it was the savage assault on a black prisoner the evening before which acted as



the catalyst for the uprising.

Several officers set up Andrew Kazim in front of other inmates and injected him multiple times with psychotropic drug Largactil, also known as the "liquid cosh".

Fellow prisoners were disgusted by the attack—and they resolved to do something about it.

It was the cruelty and degradation of prison life which caused the uprising. But these conditions weren't exclusive to Strangeways.

And when the riot kicked off, resistance quickly spread. Over the 25 days that the inmates controlled the prison, there were solidarity uprisings in 20 jails across Britain.

In Dartmoor up to 120 inmates took part in a large protest, taking to the roofs of two wings. They held up a banner which read, "Strangeways we are with you."

And in Bristol some 400

inmates took control of three wings of Horfield prison for two days.

Meanwhile at Strangeways, some 140 were in control of five wings.

As press and supporters gathered outside the jail the protesters on the roof articulated their demands.

They included better visiting facilities, including allowing physical contact and a play area for children.

Category A prisoners were also to be allowed to wear their own clothes and be sent food parcels. They also demanded longer times to exercise and an end to being cooped up in their cells for 23 hours a day.

While inmates tried to communicate with supporters, police blared sirens in an attempt to drown them out. So prisoners ripped a chalkboard from the jail's classroom and wrote their demands on it.

And the demands were not limited to prison reform. Days before the uprising there had been riots against the implementation of the poll tax.

On the roof of Strangeways prisoners held up a sign saying, "Smash the poll tax."

During the siege battles took



place between riot teams and prisoners. Some 300 riot police and prison officers stormed the site and set fire to a wing to smoke out the inmates.

They charged through the prison banging shields and shouting. The protesters set up a barricade and threw scaffolding bars at the officers. After a while the riot team retreated.

The right wing press demanded the uprising be swiftly put down. The Sun newspaper ran a headline saying, "Jail riot scum must be crushed."

Alan offered to become a negotiator on the protesters' behalf. Inmates

had already helped younger prisoners who wanted to leave but were scared of reprisals get access to their parents or solicitors.

**ALAN WAS told to convince protesters to surrender—but many didn't trust the authorities. They held up a banner which read "told we will die", in reference to threats from officers.**

Demands were put in place to ensure surrendering prisoners' safety, including having photographs taken of their bodies to make sure they weren't beaten up. Inmate numbers fell over the course of the 25 days, yet a solid core remained.

But it wasn't long before the promises of peaceful surrender collapsed and the authorities went on the offensive.

Alan was one of the prisoners who did not surrender but was "snatched" in the last days of the protest and trussed up. A photo was taken showing his head and arms being forcibly



held up while an officer grins beside him. Officers soon gained control of the ground level, while inmates still held the upper levels.

Paul was one of the last five on the roof. They were constantly sprayed with water.

After nearly a month on the roof, including in the snow and facing down threats from officers, they ended it on their own terms.

The uprising shook the entire penal system—and retribution was its aftermath. The "ring leaders" were sent off to prisons around Britain.

Meanwhile, the courts handed down punitive sentences to protesting prisoners.

Paul was

given ten years. He was convicted of a brand new offence—prison mutiny. Alan was also convicted of prison mutiny, and was

150 Category A prisoners. "Tensions had been building in Wandsworth for some time. The food was so bad and the screws were so arrogant.

"There was one occasion when we came down for our meal and the screws had pasted on the hotplate their menu—and it was all this nice food.

"All we had was cornbeef and slop.

"I work for Inside Time newspaper now and we

get so many letters from prisoners about their conditions. Things are going back to pre-Strangeways.

"There's still 20 prisons slopping out. And things are going backwards with all the budget cuts and restricted regimes.

"You've got inmates coming into jails and in their first week—the most vulnerable time—they are being made to wear prison uniforms and sleep in a bare cell."

insidetime.org

not released until 2013.

The prisoners' uprising forced an inquiry into not only the riot, but its underlying causes. But the Woolf Inquiry did not take any evidence from the prisoners.

Instead it said it would not give them "self publicity". And because some had alleged brutality by officers the inquiry would become "bogged down if it tried to establish the truth".

The subsequent Woolf report made numerous recommendations, including a general improvement in prison conditions.

Overcrowding was a key issue in the uprising. The prison had been built in the 1860s to hold 970 inmates but in 1990 there were more than

the Howard League for Penal Reform found that on any given day 20,000 inmates were held in overcrowded cells.

And rates of prisoner suicide are surging. Numbers of suicides in jails in England and Wales are at a seven-year high.

Yet there has been resistance. Last year inmates at Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Grampian in Peterhead rioted for 14 hours. Reports say 41 prisoners protested after refusing to return to their cells.

This followed an uprising at HMP Northumberland last March, where inmates took over an entire wing after refusing to return to their cells.

And in January last year prisoners at HMP Oakwood near Birmingham took part in their second protest in as many months.

The Strangeways riot brought into the public's consciousness what life was like on the inside.

But conditions have not got better—they have worsened. It will take more resistance to finish off what the Strangeways inmates started.

1,600. Often three inmates were held in a cell designed for one. But this is still true of prisons today. Last year



## WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

### INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

### REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

### THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

### INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

### THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to [www.swp.org.uk](http://www.swp.org.uk) or phone 020 7819 1170 for more information

### { SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

#### CHESTERFIELD

##### Syriza and socialist strategy

Thu 23 Apr, 7.30pm  
Chesterfield Library,  
New Beetwell St,  
S40 1QL (please enter via  
the Cafe Browser entrance)

### { SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

#### ABERDEEN

##### Socialists and elections

Thu 16 Apr, 7pm,  
The Snug, Ma Cameron's,  
6-8 Little Belmont St,  
AB10 1JG

#### BARNLEY

##### China in the world today

Thu 16 Apr, 6.30pm,  
YMCA, Blucher St,  
S70 1AP

#### BIRMINGHAM: CITY CENTRE

##### Is the economic recovery real?

Thu 16 Apr, 7pm,  
Priority Rooms,  
Quaker Meeting House,  
40 Bull St, B4 6AF

#### BOLTON

##### Capitalism vs the climate — is Naomi Klein right?

Wed 22 Apr, 6.30pm,  
Bolton Socialist Club,  
16 Wood Street (off  
Bradshawgate),  
BL1 1DY

#### BRADFORD

##### To vote or not to vote?

Wed 15 Apr, 7pm,  
Equity Centre,  
Perkin House,  
82 Grattan Rd,  
BD1 2LU

#### BRIGHTON

##### What do socialists say about nationalism?

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Ship St,  
BN1 1AF

#### BRISTOL: NORTH

##### Can an economy be run for need not profit?

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
The Canteen, 5th Floor,  
Hamilton House,  
80 Stokes Croft,  
BS1 3QY

#### BRISTOL: SOUTH

##### Fighting back—the US working class in the 1930s

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
YHA, Narrow Quay,  
BS1 4QA

#### CAMBRIDGE

##### From Selma to Ferguson—the fight for Civil Rights in the US

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Shanghai Family Restaurant,  
39 Burleigh St,  
CB1 1DG

#### CARDIFF

##### Do we need system change to stop climate change?

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Cathays Community Centre,  
Cathays Terrace,  
CF24 4HX

#### CHELMSFORD

##### Immigration—the myths used to divide us

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Rainsford Rd,  
CM1 2QL

#### CHESTERFIELD

##### How do we fight austerity and the cuts?

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Chesterfield Library,  
New Beetwell St,  
S40 1QL (please enter via  
the Cafe Browser entrance)

#### COLCHESTER

##### Socialists, TUSC and the general election

Tues 14 Apr, 7.30pm,  
The Odd One Out,  
28 Mersea Rd,  
CO2 7ET



# The Westminster elite—is the old party system dying?

#### DUNDEE

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Dundee Voluntary Action,  
10 Constitution Rd,  
DD1 1LL

#### EXETER

Thu 23 Apr, 7pm,  
New Horizon Café,  
47 Longbrook St,  
EX4 6AW

#### KIRKCALDY

Mon 4 May, 7.30pm,  
Betty Nicol's Pub,

297 High St,  
KY1 1JL

#### LONDON: BRIXTON

Wed 15 Apr, 7pm,  
Vida Walsh Centre,  
2b Saltoun Rd, (near Effra  
Rd, facing Windrush Square),  
SW2 1EP

#### LONDON: HACKNEY

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
The Round Chapel,  
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner  
Lower Clapton Rd), E5 0PU

#### LONDON: HORNSEY AND WOOD GREEN

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
West Indian Cultural Centre,  
9 Clarendon Rd, Haringey,  
N8 0DD

#### LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Quaker Meeting House, 1a  
Jewel Rd (off Hoe St),  
E17 4QU

#### COVENTRY

##### Isis and counter-revolution—a Marxist analysis

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
West Indian Centre,  
159 Spon St,  
CV1 3BB

#### ESSEX

##### What next after the general election?

Thu 7 May, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Rainsford Rd,  
CM1 2QL

#### GLASGOW: SOUTH

##### Are we heading for an economic recovery—or another slump?

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Govanhill Baths,  
99 Calder St,  
G42 7RA

#### HARLOW

##### How radical are the Greens?

Thu 23 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
1 Church Leys,  
CM18 6BX

#### HUDDERSFIELD

##### From Selma to Ferguson—civil rights in the US

Wed 15 Apr, 6.30pm,  
Brian Jackson House,  
2 New North Parade, (near  
both train and bus stations)  
HD1 5JP

#### IPSWICH

##### Why we say that workers have the power to change the world

Tue 5 May, 7pm,  
Labour Club,  
33-35 Silent St,  
IP1 1TF

#### LANCASTER

##### How radical are the Greens?

Thu 16 April, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
Meeting House Lane,  
LA1 1TX

Thu 16 Apr, 7pm,  
Theatro Technis,  
26 Crowndale Rd,  
NW1 1TT

#### LONDON: EALING

##### The roots of the Holocaust—what do socialists say?

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
W3 Gallery,  
185 High St, Acton,  
W3 9DJ

#### LONDON: KINGSTON

##### From Selma to Ferguson—the fight for Civil Rights in the US

Wed 15 Apr, 7pm,  
Kingston Quaker Centre,  
Fairfield East,  
KT1 2PT

#### LONDON: LEWISHAM

##### Science and socialism

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
West Greenwich Community  
and Arts Centre,  
141 Greenwich High Rd  
(near Greenwich main  
line and DLR Station),  
SE10 8JA

#### LONDON: NEWHAM

##### Is Marx still relevant today?

Wed 15 Apr, 7pm,  
Stratford Advice Arcade,  
107-109 The Grove  
(next to Morrisons  
supermarket car park),  
E15 1HP

#### LONDON: SOUTHWARK

##### Why do socialists stand in elections?

Thu 16 Apr, 7pm,  
Snug Room, The Grand Union,  
26 Camberwell Grove (off  
Camberwell Church St),  
SE5 8RE

#### LONDON: TOTTENHAM

##### Are we heading for an economic recovery—or another slump?

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Kitabevi Cafe,  
410 Tottenham High Rd,  
N17 9JB

#### LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

##### Can workers change the world?

Wed 15 Apr, 7pm,  
Oxford House,  
Derbyshire St (opp Bethnal  
Green Rd Tesco),  
E2 6HG

#### MANCHESTER: CHORLTON

##### Who was Lenin?

Wed 15 Apr, 7pm,  
Chorlton Library  
(side entrance),  
Manchester Rd,  
M21 9PN

#### MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE

##### Capitalism—a Marxist analysis and alternative

Thu 16 Apr, 7pm,  
Friends Meeting House,  
6 Mount St,  
M2 5NS

#### MEDWAY

##### Socialists and elections

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
The Nucleus Arts Centre,  
Conference Room,  
272 High St, Chatham,  
ME4 4BP

#### NEWCASTLE

##### How radical are the Greens?

Thu 16 Apr, 7pm,  
The Labour Club,  
11 Leazes Park Rd,  
NE1 4PF

#### NORWICH

##### Socialists and elections—what's the point of voting?

Thu 23 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Vauxhall Centre,  
Johnson Place,  
NR2 2SA

#### NOTTINGHAM

##### To vote or not to vote?

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
International  
Community Centre,  
61b Mansfield Rd,  
NG1 3FN

#### OXFORD

##### Where does racism come from?

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Restore,  
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),  
OX4 1YH

#### PORTSMOUTH

##### From Selma to Ferguson—the fight for Civil Rights in the US

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Somerstown Central,

Rivers St,  
PO5 4EY

#### ROTHERHAM

##### Is revolution possible?

Wed 15 Apr, 7pm,  
Bridge Inn,  
Greasbrough Rd  
(near the bus and  
train stations),  
S60 1RB

#### SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

##### Reform or revolution?

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Central United  
Reformed Church,  
60 Norfolk St (near  
Crucible Theatre),  
S1 2JB

#### SOUTHAMPTON

##### How can Palestine be free? An eyewitness report

Wed 29 Apr, 7.30pm,  
High Street Cafe,  
153 High St,  
SO14 2BT

#### SWANSEA

##### From Selma to Ferguson—the fight for Civil Rights in the US

Thu 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Brynmill Community Centre,  
St Albans Rd,  
SA2 0BP

#### WIGAN

##### Capitalism isn't working—what's the answer?

Wed 15 Apr, 7pm,  
Anvil Arms,  
Dorning St,  
WN1 1ND

#### WOLVERHAMPTON AND WALSALL

##### Immigration—the myths used to divide us

Thur 16 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Grain Store,  
King St,  
WV1 1ST

#### YORK

##### Is human nature a barrier to socialism?

Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Sea Horse Hotel,  
4 Fawcett St,  
YO10 4AH

### { MOVEMENT EVENTS }

#### DORCHESTER

##### Dorset Socialists monthly meeting

Sat 2 May, 1.30pm,  
Colliton Club,  
Colliton Park (opposite  
County Hall),  
DT1 1XJ

#### EDINBURGH

##### TUSC public meeting—why you should vote socialist in Edinburgh East

Wed 15 Apr, 7pm,  
Craigintinny  
Community Centre,  
9 Loaning Rd,  
EH7 6JE

#### LONDON

##### People's Convention for the NHS

Sat 11 Apr, 11am—4.30pm  
Emmanuel Centre,  
Marsham Street,  
SW1P 3DW

#### NATIONAL

##### Fast Food Rights global day of action

Wed 15 Apr,  
For details of action near you  
go to <https://fastfoodrights.wordpress.com/>  
**Marxism 2015 festival**  
Thu 9—Mon 13 Jul,  
Central London.  
[marxismfestival.org.uk](http://marxismfestival.org.uk)

### CONTACT THE SWP

Phone 020 7819 1172  
Email  
[enquires@swp.org.uk](mailto:enquires@swp.org.uk)  
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London SW8 2WD

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# A moving epic that's built on an unheroic idea of war

Russell Crowe's new film, *The Water Diviner*, is visually stunning and brings out the chaos the First World War caused in Turkey, writes **Robbie Shaw**

**THIS ANTI-WAR epic is the first film directed by actor Russell Crowe—and he does it with a classic feel and compelling effect.**

After his wife's suicide, Joshua Connor (Crowe) travels to Turkey in search of the bodies of his three sons. They were all killed in the 1916 Battle of Gallipoli.

In Istanbul, Connor meets Turkish hotel matron Ayshe (Olga Kurylenko), who's immediately obvious as Connor's love interest.

After a night of drinking with a Turkish militia, Connor sets off with them on a second quest.

It takes him through the instability and violence left by the First World War. Turkey is now at war with Greece.

This depiction of instability in a largely Muslim country is timely.

## Performance

Crowe's performance is gruff and understated, forcing the plot to take primacy.

There's a deeply embedded pain and weariness behind his eyes, but any raw emotion is unconvincing.

His directing is visually stunning and has real impact, especially in action scenes.

Crowe manages to amplify the tense and exciting script as well as the landscape's beauty.

The gruesome war scenes peppered throughout are portrayed as unheroic.

The plot is built on the "folly of war", and shows the competition



RUSSELL CROWE as Joshua Connor in Turkey searching for the bodies of his sons who died at Gallipoli

between imperial rivals. But it entirely fails to comment on that.

A British officer comments that the First World War was the first to commemorate working class dead. Connor might not have had to search for his son's bodies if they were generals.

However, class is mostly absent as a theme.

The film's failure to mention the 1915 Armenian genocide is miss timed, as the Turkish government tries to distract from its centenary.

The *Water Diviner* only features one woman character, but Ayshe is proud and complicated.

Her struggle with subjugation is depicted without Islamophobic stereotypes.

Although her interesting subplot is shoe-horned in, and her and Connor's romance is formulaic and dull.

The *Water Diviner* is a flawed project. But I would recommend it to anyone who likes a good action movie.

*The Water Diviner*  
Directed by Russell Crowe  
Out now

## A history of a working class family's life and struggle

### BOOK

**THE VALLEY: A HUNDRED YEARS IN THE LIFE OF A YORKSHIRE FAMILY**

by Richard Benson  
£9.99 Bloomsbury

MINES DOMINATED the lower Dearne River Valley in South Yorkshire until the Tories shut them down.

It is not a place that makes it into travel books.

Its principal town, Goldthorpe, made the news in 2013, when former miners burned Margaret Thatcher's effigy.

Richard Benson's *The Valley* is a biography of his mother's family's life in the Dearne Valley from when his great grandfather came to



Harry Hollingworth (far right) with his workmates

work in one of the new pits.

It's a story of an ordinary working class family confronted with the sort of frustrations and joys that we all have.

Yet with a novelist's knack for developing character, he gives his family an epic quality that made me want to read on to discover their fates.

Not all of the men were

miners. His mother's parents Winnie and Harry Hollingworth are central to the story, but Harry left the industry in 1947.

So there's nothing about the unofficial miners' strikes of 1969 and 1970 and disappointingly little about the great victories of 1972 and 1974.

But it is different for the 1984 strike and its aftermath.

Four of the family were on strike throughout. Through their experiences we read stories of picketing and police violence—including the police rampage through Goldthorpe in November 1984.

Benson's aunt Lynda, a striking National Coal

Board (NCB) clerical worker, sums up this heroic resilience.

She's hospitalised and put in the next bed to a working under manager.

She argues ferociously with him, finally winning when she plasters his wheelchair with "Coal Not Dole" stickers.

After the strike finishes the book charts the decline and death of both Harry and Winnie, and the mining industry.

But there is hope, too, as the miners in the family make new lives for themselves.

I urge you to read it—and realise that all our families have similar inspiring histories.

Dave Gibson

### FILM

**GOOD KILL**

Directed by Andrew Niccol  
IFC Films  
Out now

A COUPLE of films and plays have come out recently that look at what it's like to be a drone pilot.

They focus on the stress and trauma that it inflicts on pilots, as they blow up and murder targets at the press of a joystick button.

This reflects a broader shift in US culture, in response to George W Bush's wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Iraq led to a series of anti-war films—alongside reactionary action films such as *The Hurt Locker*.

The material also became much darker now.

*Good Kill* is based around US Air Force pilot Tom Egan (Ethan Hawke).

He's lost his wings, and now commands a drone unit from a bunker outside Las Vegas.

We see them going



Ethan Hawke

through the motions of firing drones again and again.

The film is trying to explore the disconnect between killing and not seeing the victims.

"I blew away six Taliban in Pakistan today, now I'm going home to barbecue," says Egan.

It's partly a reaction to war. But it's subject matter means that drone films purely focus on the soldiers personal struggles, not the people the US is murdering.

That's the real problem with drone films.

### RADIO

**THE SOUL AND MOTOWN SHOW**

BBC WM and Iplayer Radio

Every Sunday you should tune in to Jenny Wilke's radio show, with its classic Northern Soul and Motown tracks

It is on BBC WM FM, but you can stream it and check out previous shows on BBC Iplayer Radio.

To request your favourite song you can tweet @BillyQuiet or look for the hashtag #BBCWMSOUL.



**O**VER 100 bosses signed a letter in the Telegraph newspaper as the election campaign began to tell us to vote Tory because they are good for business.

They said cuts to corporation tax had boosted profits—and that a Labour government would threaten this growth.

They also threw in a threat of mass sackings for good measure.

From an early age it's drummed into us that voting is the key to changing society. During elections we are asked which party we want to see “in power”.

But the reality is the MPs, cabinet ministers and whoever lives at 10 Downing Street do not really run the country.

Those who do are the tiny, unelected elite who have always ruled over us but do a good job of hiding it.

The letter to the Telegraph was a rare glimpse of this elite.

People rightly get angry when MPs are caught profiting from their privileged position through fiddling expenses or selling their influence.

Some argue the problem is a corrupt political class more interested in their own bank balance than those of the people they are supposedly there to serve.

But the truth about who really runs Britain is even worse.

It is the super rich who control society, accountable to no one except possibly their shareholders.

#### Bankers

The chief executives, bankers and industrialists control the wealth and power. They are the ones that make the economic decisions that can affect all of our lives.

Last year they marshalled their influence to frighten people in Scotland against voting for independence.

Daily news reports bombarded people with nightmare scenarios should they vote Yes.

Some, such as the bosses at B&Q, said it would mean jobs would be lost.

Yet last week its owners announced the closure of 60 stores—3,000 job losses—anyway.

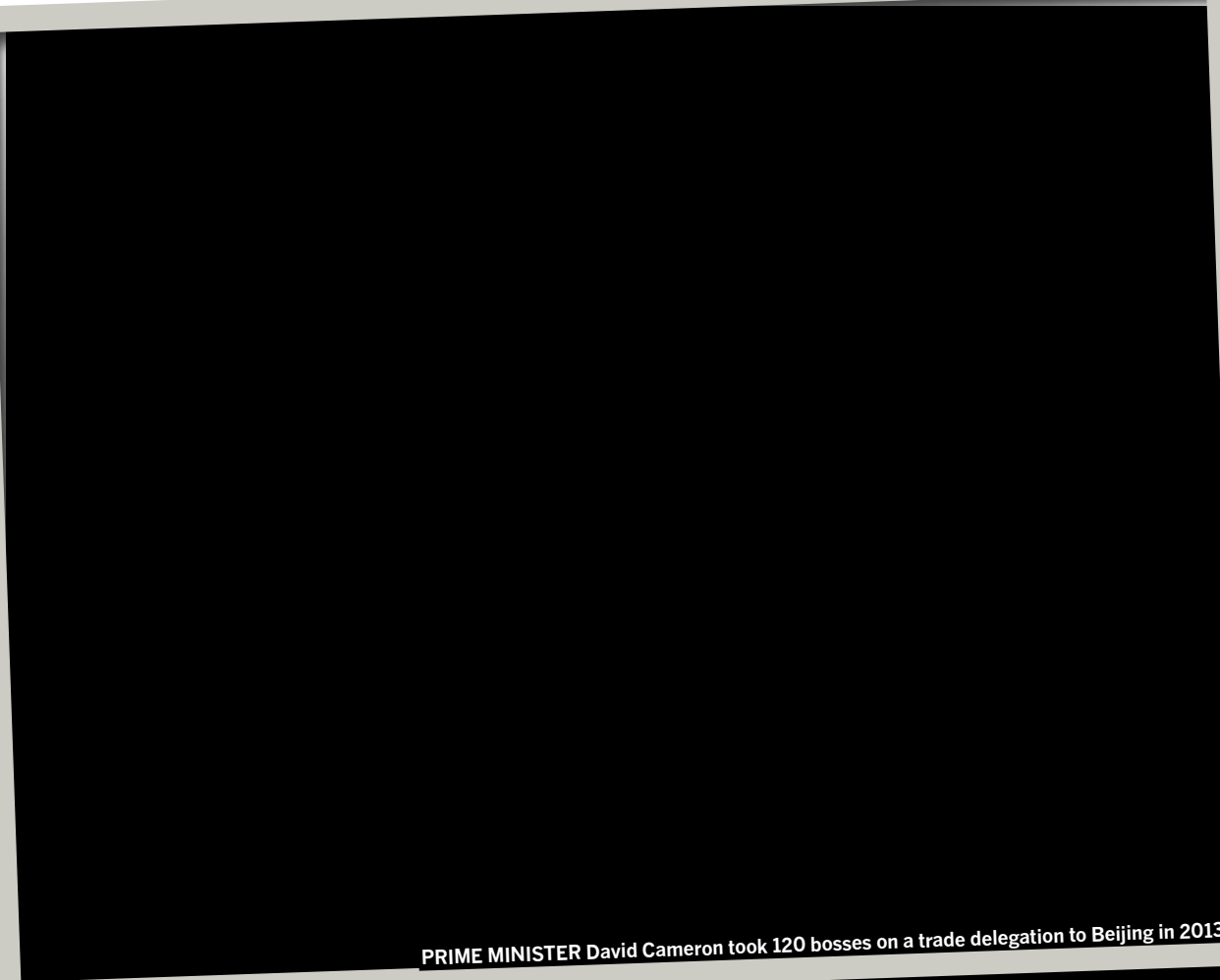
In Britain there are 104 billionaires with a total wealth of over £301 billion—an average of £3 billion each.

Meanwhile the poorest fifth of the population have less than a tenth as much between them.

Britain has more billionaires per head of population than any other country.

Controlling such extreme wealth gives them huge economic power—and unrivalled political influence.

There are just 1,120 FTSE



# HOW THE RICH RUN BRITAIN

At the general election we will be asked which party do we want “in power”. But, as Raymie Kiernan explains, it is a rich elite who really wields influence in Britain



Vladimir Lenin

100 company directors on boards that control a total stock market value of £1.25 trillion. Most of them sit on more than one board.

Usually this power is described as “market forces”, not pinpointed to a group of individuals.

It's presented to us as a natural phenomenon like the weather.

It used to be easier to see that we are ruled by the rich.

A few centuries ago



**We are told the lie that we need bosses and politicians to organise things**

landowners and later industrialists had their own seats in parliament.

Today they rely on MPs and other wings of the ruling class to keep the wheels of the capitalist state turning.

This includes the police chiefs, military generals, judges, top civil servants and others.

The whole state apparatus acts to organise affairs in the interests of the capitalist class. It is not neutral.

It protects the minority's

wealth from the majority who produce it, violently if necessary. This is usually termed “law and order”.

But the state and capital aren't the same thing.

Elected politicians do make important decisions that can make it easier or harder for the ruling class to pursue its interests.

They decide if a state goes to war, restricts workers' rights, funds public services or sets a higher minimum wage.

This influences the distribution of wealth in society.

That's why bosses throw so much money into lobbying MPs to ensure their interests are represented and donate millions of pounds to fund political parties.

It's also why the Tories, as the privately educated group of “old boys” representing capital, legislated to limit trade unions' ability to do so.

The bosses' strategy pays off. Private health care firms with Tory links have been awarded NHS contracts worth nearly £1.5 billion.

And there is a revolving door between the top ranks of the civil service and corporate boardrooms.

Some 600 ministers and top civil servants were appointed to business roles between 2000 and 2014.

A third of top civil servants in 2013/14 were private sector appointments including former senior executives of oil and gas giants, banks and more.

**E**VEN THE committee set up to monitor any impropriety in these appointments has a board made up of representatives of the military, business and the civil service. The whole thing reeks.

Most MPs are not filthy rich—although many are and the outgoing cabinet was stuffed full of millionaires. But all are ideologically tied to ruling class interests.

Many go into politics because it is seen as a well paid career with even better perks. But some enter parliament to fight for real change.

But their principles rarely hold firm when they come up against the reality of how real power evades them and seek instead to compromise with the system.

Their experience also becomes increasingly remote from the people they are meant to serve.

Yet for all the second homes and expenses their wealth is nothing compared to those who hold real power.

This doesn't mean they will not try to grab as much cash as they can.

The latest “cash for access” corruption with Tory Malcolm Rifkind and Labour's Jack Straw demonstrates this.

Straw is now set to take an executive position after the general election with the firm he privately lobbied for to

win a £75 million government contract.

And Rifkind's role as a private health firm board member was questioned after it won a NHS contract.

This was even though its bid cost £7 million more than the NHS alternative.

It is no wonder so many people look at Westminster and think it does not represent them and that it is corrupt to the core.

They are right.

But all of this doesn't mean movements of working class people cannot influence parliament and pressure politicians to win real reforms.

Any rights we do have were not handed to us.

They were wrenched out of the ruling class's grip through struggle.

But socialists do not look to parliament to challenge the capitalist system.

Parliamentary democracy, which we are told is the highest form of popular representation, is based on the lie that every voter in society is equal—they are not.

Ordinary people have no say over decisions with the biggest impact on their lives.

#### Problem

Parliament is integral to the system, and is part of the problem.

Even the small group of left wing MPs find that they have no lever to pull that does anything other than serve the interests of capital.

They are often bullied into accepting and implementing cuts by banks threatening to stop lending or big business saying they will pack up and leave.

The bureaucracy of politicians would rather stick pins in its eyes than implement anything near an anti-capitalist agenda.

The revolving door and the elite schooling make sure of that.

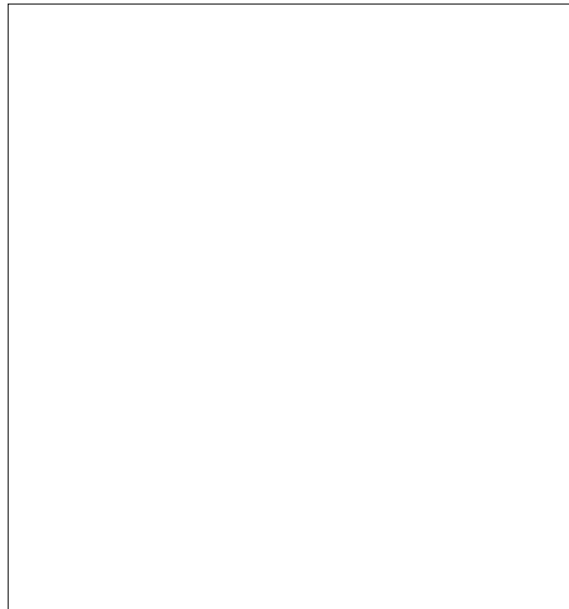
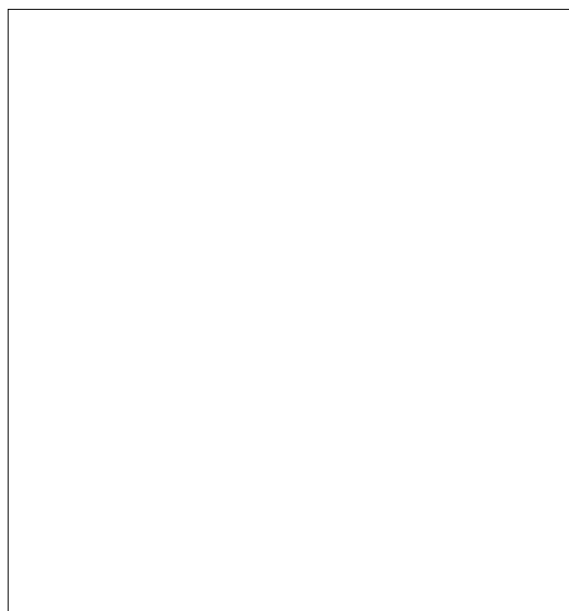
Compared to the vast resources the ruling class controls, “parliament is,” as Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin put it, “a dung heap”.

But he also argued it could be a platform to organise opposition outside the parliament.

Socialists don't see elections as just a distraction.

We stand candidates to offer a left alternative but are under no illusion that is where change comes from.

The super rich bosses could



**The unelected House of Lords (top) holds power and influence. A protest against Tory George Osborne's autumn budget (above)**

not have all their wealth without workers creating it for them.

We are often told we need politicians and bosses to organise things for us.

This is a lie.

Workers' collective power can be used to offer a society based on finding the best and most efficient ways of providing for the needs of ordinary people.

It can bring about real democracy where ordinary people run society.

And it can throw out the rich minority that make our lives a misery, and keep the wealth to themselves.

The real alternative lies with arguing to unite the movements of working class people to overturn their whole rotten system.

#### READ MORE

● **Arguments for revolution** by Charlie Kimber and Joseph Choonara £3

● **The State and Revolution** by Vladimir Lenin bit.ly/1GobtyT

● **The state and capitalism today** by Chris Harman, International Socialism 51 bit.ly/1IZLoY

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to [bookmarksbookshop.co.uk](http://bookmarksbookshop.co.uk)



## Nigeria's election points to deeper struggles ahead

The peaceful election of a president shows Nigerians that change is possible, writes **Baba Aye** of the Socialist Workers League

FORMER MILITARY dictator general Muhammadu Buhari was elected president in Nigeria last week.

During the campaign his All Progressives Congress (APC) called him “the people's general”, promising “change”.

The junta he headed from 1983-85 locked up corrupt politicians, but it repressed all types of political organisations. It oversaw indiscriminate detention without trial. Nigerians danced on the streets when it was overthrown.

But now Buhari uses his reputation as an austere, plain-speaking strongman as evidence he will keep his promises. They are to end corruption, defeat Boko Haram's insurgency in the northeast and eradicate unemployment.

President Goodluck Jonathan accepted defeat—the first time in Nigeria's history that this has happened.

The election was delayed for six weeks from 14 February as the military said it could not guarantee security during a major offensive against Boko Haram.

The issuing of Permanent Voters Cards (PVCs) to stop voting fraud was another reason for the delay. People were outraged that a week before the original poll date only 50 percent of potential voters had been issued with these voting cards.

Many Nigerians believe the delay was an attempt by Jonathan's conservative People's Democratic Party (PDP) to shore up support for his re-election bid.

Things seemed to go PDP's way. The military campaign recovered 80 percent of the territory that Boko Haram had held since last August. Most PVCs were distributed. And PDP threw everything into reminding people that Buhari had been a merciless dictator.

But this was not enough.

**SUPPORTERS OF the winning APC celebrate waving the party symbol of a broom to sweep away corruption**

#### BACK STORY

**The Nigerian general election was held on 28 and 29 March**

● Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress won with 15,424,921 votes or 53.96 percent

● Goodluck Jonathan of the People's Democratic Party got 44.96 percent

● Nigeria is Africa's most populous country and has almost 70 million voters

● Turnout was 47 percent

Buhari won for four main reasons. First, oil prices have collapsed and Nigeria, as a major oil producer, is in economic crisis. The government is implementing austerity. A third of Nigeria's 36 states are behind in paying public sector wages—by up to five months.

Second, the bungled war against Boko Haram. Buhari resoundingly won in the newly “liberated areas” where

the government's action is seen as too little too late.

Third, APC offered a national opposition. Nigerian politics has tended to be based on ethno-regional “catchment areas”. The PDP, which has won every presidential election since democracy was restored in 1999, was arguably the first real pan-Nigerian party.

The APC was formed two years ago as a merger of four different parties which guaranteed a national spread of influence, party machinery and resources.

Fourth, the use of PVCs drastically limited the room for electoral fraud, which has worked in favour of incumbent parties.

Elections for state governors and law-makers are scheduled for 11 April.

PDP governors will do everything to maintain control in states they rule. Buoyed by its presidential victory, APC will also go all out to win. So it is not certain that the reasonableness that followed the presidential election will be maintained.

But the real test will come after Buhari is sworn in on 29 May. Fulfilling any of his campaign promises would be a Herculean task with the state's level of insolvency.

But the reawakened masses have learned that power could truly lie in their hands, and are unlikely to wait four years before confronting the general they have brought to power.

Read Baba Aye's blog at [solidarityandstruggle.blogspot.com](http://solidarityandstruggle.blogspot.com)

**“Fulfilling any of Buhari's campaign promises would be a Herculean task**



# Don't leave Greece to fight alone

by JOHN McLOUGHLIN

A JOINT solidarity delegation of councillors and trade unionists from the London borough of Tower Hamlets visited Greece last month.

It was facilitated by the Greek Solidarity Campaign, led by deputy mayor Oli Rahman and included representatives from the Unison, NUT and Unite Community unions.

People in Greece are facing the might of the bosses' European institutions. We heard what this means from local authority trade unionists—60 percent pay cuts and 250,000 public sector jobs lost, equivalent to 2 million in Britain.

## Crisis

Even more vivid was hearing from Solidarity4all. It coordinates the social centres and health clinics springing up across Greece around the simple slogan "no-one should be alone in the crisis".

It provides food distribution and basic health care. It's based entirely on volunteers, not as charity but as active citizenship.

Ruling party Syriza MPs pay 12 percent of their salaries to help fund it and it is open to all—except fascists.



A delegation meeting with Bangladeshi migrant workers

PICTURE: JOHN McLOUGHLIN

If you want a picture of Britain without the NHS or of racist Ukip leader Nigel Farage's dreams of blocking migrants from services, visit Greece. Migrant workers suffer most.

There is a substantial Bangladeshi community in Greece.

It faces shocking levels of racism, as do other migrant workers.

We were told of physical attacks by fascist Golden Dawn members.

We heard first hand from Tipu Chowdhury, one of the Manolada strawberry field strikers who struck demanding wages that were

unpaid for several months. Hired thugs threatened to shoot them unless they returned to work.

The workers did not believe them, but they did—injuring 35 with buckshot.

They are still fighting for justice. And they played a major part in the 15,000 strong anti-racist march in Athens last month.

One evening we crammed into a tiny Bangladeshi restaurant for a solidarity meeting. Hundreds were left outside in the street.

## Struggle

We brought our history of struggle of workers' organisations and migrant communities uniting against racism in east London, and how migrant communities can provide political leadership.

Seeing the reaction to our delegation in Greece gave a new perspective to our own experience.

It underscored how important international solidarity is for the Greek people. I urge other trade unionists and campaigners to arrange a solidarity visit.

A key question in all our discussions was how to apply a counterweight to the pressure from Europe's rulers on the Syriza government.

The first answer was always solidarity—don't leave the Greek people to fight alone.

But there was also a deep sense of the ongoing combativity of the Greek people, sometimes expressed as wariness.

Local authority trade unionists were confident that their mass strikes played a part in contributing to the election of a left wing government in Greece. But they said change was only at a psychological level so far.

As one put it, "Under the old government you didn't know when you went to bed if you would have your job in the morning."

"Under the new one at least you know they will wake you up and tell you."

But people expect change—such as the Bangladeshi woman who spoke of Syriza's promises of citizenship rights, particularly for children born in Greece. That must be delivered.

There is a mood of determination and solidarity in Greece. People won't just accept whatever conditions the bosses seek to impose on the Greek working class.

John is secretary of Tower Hamlets Unison branch. He writes in a personal capacity.

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# Cops searched for evidence to blame fans for deadly crush

The Hillsborough inquests heard former top cop Peter Hayes agree that cops tried to gather evidence against fans—but he denies being involved in lying, reports **Sadie Robinson**

**POLICE OFFICERS** tried to “raise the profile of evidence which blamed the fans” in the wake of the Hillsborough football disaster, inquests have heard.

Some 96 Liverpool fans died as a result of a crush on 15 April 1989 at the Sheffield stadium.

Peter Hayes was deputy chief constable of South Yorkshire Police (SYP) at the time of the disaster.

Hayes finished giving evidence to fresh inquests into their deaths last week.

He agreed that officers in charge of “evidence gathering” were looking “for evidence adverse to the supporters”.

He said officers used their internal HOLMES computer system to “discover the evidence about fans’ misbehaviour”.

But he denied that he was managing that process.

## Written

Pete Weatherby QC, representing 22 families of the dead, asked Hayes about an attendance note written by SYP lawyer Peter Metcalf’s assistant.

It was dated 31 October 1990, in the run-up to the original inquests into the deaths.

The note referred to lists “prepared by Norman Bettison about the identification of witnesses”.

Weatherby asked Hayes, “This relates, doesn’t it, to South Yorkshire Police providing lists of witnesses to the coroner through West Midlands Police?”

Hayes replied, “It would appear so, yes.”

David Duckenfield, match commander on the day of the disaster, told a lie as the disaster was unfolding that fans forced

open a gate. Hayes told the court he could not recall when he learned of the lie.

But he said he heard that police opened a gate at a press conference on the day of the crush.

When asked how he could remember one thing but not another Hayes replied, “I can’t explain that.”

## Disaster

Hayes and other officers viewed video footage of the disaster the next day. He agreed that he appeared “to be looking for signs that gate C was forced”.

Hayes was responsible for discipline in SYP at the time of the crush. He denied that the reason he wouldn’t say when he became aware of Duckenfield’s lie was because he didn’t want to explain why he did nothing about it.

But he agreed that the lie “could amount to police disciplinary offences of disreputable conduct”.

He denied that a decision had been taken hours after the disaster “to protect Mr Duckenfield’s credibility in order to avoid crippling South Yorkshire Police’s moral and legal position”.

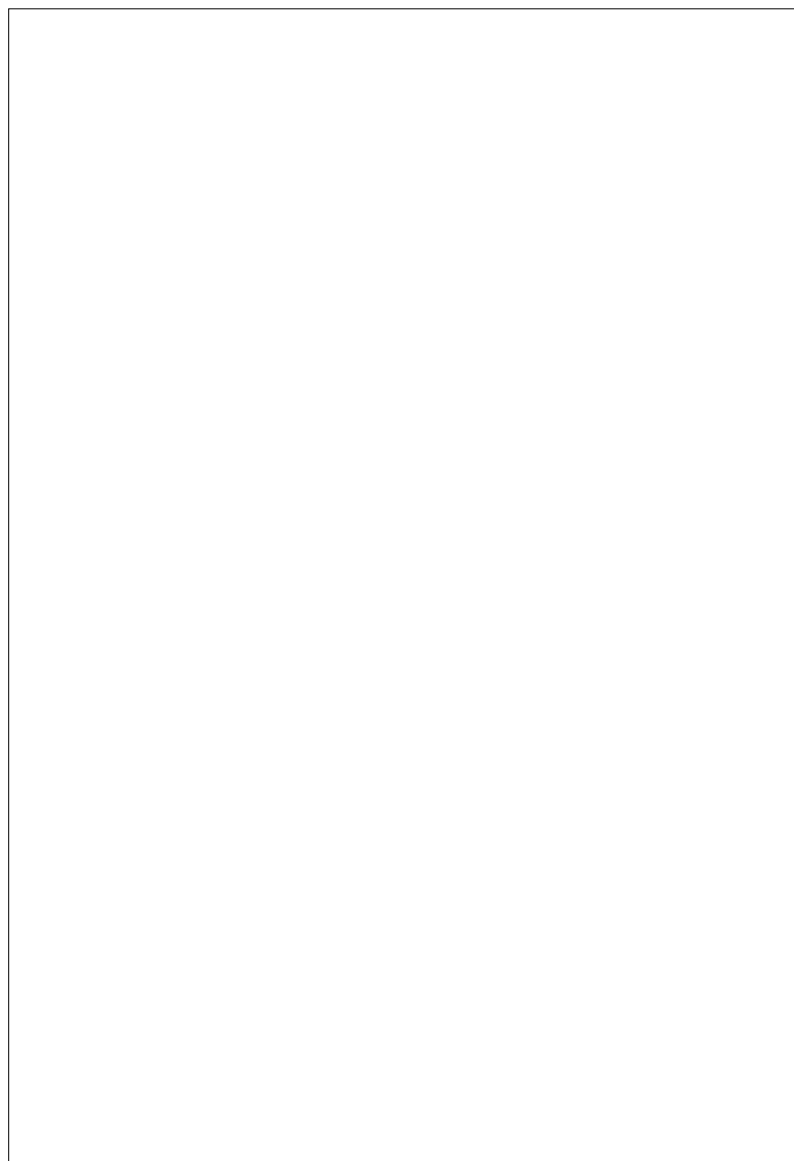
Peter Wilcock QC asked Hayes if he had aimed to minimise criticism of SYP by hiding the fact that senior officers knew of Duckenfield’s lie “from day one”.

Hayes replied, “That was known about on day one, yes; not by me.” He denied that SYP hid that fact.

The inquests have adjourned until Monday 20 April.

For a longer version of this article go to [socialistworker.co.uk](http://socialistworker.co.uk)

For more on Peter Hayes’ evidence see [tinyurl.com/ldnfqvl](http://tinyurl.com/ldnfqvl)



Hillsborough memorial

# Relatives said the police were ‘trying to set us up’

**FRANCIS** Tyrrell’s son Kevin died as a result of the Hillsborough disaster aged just 15.

Francis told the inquests about his treatment by police on the day.

Police asked Francis to look at photos of the dead at the Hillsborough stadium gym. Yet they already knew Kevin was dead.

When Francis asked why they didn’t tell him this an officer replied, “We haven’t got time to tell people.”

Francis, as with many relatives, told the jury that

police stopped them from touching the bodies of their loved ones.

“It was like we were criminals,” he said.

Leslie Jones said his wife Doreen had tried to cuddle the body of their son Richard.

“But the police officer pulled her up roughly and said, ‘Sorry he’s the property of the coroner now, you can’t touch him’.”

Francis told the court that police sergeant Hall interviewed them about Kevin. “He just said, ‘It’s one consolation, your son

hadn’t been drinking’.

“I said, ‘He doesn’t drink’. I could hear other people shouting and I said to my brother, ‘We’re getting out of here because these are trying to set us up.’

“They wanted us to react. We were just getting treated like muck, basically.”

Francis added, “The next time he came home, he was cut to bits after a post-mortem, and there was no consolation to us that our son hadn’t had a drink.”

Martin Thompson’s

brother Stuart died as a result of the crush.

Martin told the inquests, “The very first question asked was what had I had to drink today. Then I was asked what Stuart had been drinking.”

John McCarthy told the court that officers from the criminal investigation into Hillsborough, Operation Resolve, had shown him a video of the body of his brother Ian Glover as he lay in the gym.

John said Ian had a bin bag covering his face. “No dignity at all, even when he was dead,” he said.

## Misleading public inquiry?

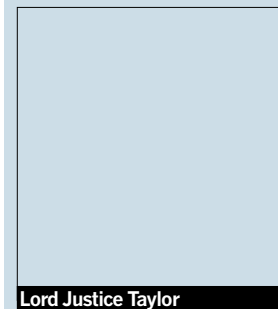
**LORD** Justice Taylor’s public inquiry into the disaster began on 15 May 1989.

The court heard that Taylor had warned SYP that they could face the allegation that they failed to block the tunnel leading to pens 3 and 4.

Hayes said he was “probably” becoming aware of police failings when viewing the footage the day after the disaster.

This included police failure to control the crowd outside the Leppings Lane entrance and their failure to close the tunnel.

Pete Weatherby QC asked if this was the case, why there was no



Lord Justice Taylor

reference to a failure to close the tunnel in the SYP submission to the Taylor inquiry.

Hayes replied, “I find it inconceivable that that wasn’t part of the submission.”

The inquests heard that SYP made further submissions to Taylor before he considered his conclusions. They included no reference to failings by SYP.

Hayes denied that this was because it “was part of a cover up”. He denied that he was misleading the public inquiry.

Leaving tributes to the 96 victims



## IN BRIEF

**BBC World Service studio walkout**

STUDIO MANAGERS at the BBC Global News studio struck for 12 hours on Thursday of last week.

The members of the Bectu union are fighting scheduling changes which reduce the number of people who can take leave at any one time.

Bectu said the walkout directly affected the BBC World Service output.

**Fast food workers hold day of action**

THE FAST Food Rights campaign is set to take part in a global day of action on Wednesday of next week. It is supported by the bakers' Bfawu union.

Protests will be held outside branches of McDonalds in towns and cities across Britain to demand a living wage and better working conditions.

The day of action was called in solidarity with fast food workers in the US. They have built a movement for £10 an hour wages and the right to organise in trade unions.

●Find your nearest action [fastfoodrights.wordpress.com](http://fastfoodrights.wordpress.com)

**Tour guides vote to strike over pay**

TOUR GUIDES and exhibition workers at the Globe Theatre in London have voted to strike over pay.

The members of the Bectu union voted by 96.9 percent to strike, and 100 percent were in favour of action short of a strike.

They are fighting for a higher pay deal than the £11.72 per hour offered by bosses, which is lower than pay rates at similar London venues.

**Students and staff win the Living Wage**

ALL WORKERS at the University of Bath from 1 April will now receive the Living Wage of £7.85 an hour.

Although the deal is not yet consolidated into staff contracts it's a step forward for workers on minimum wage zero hours contracts.

After two years of campaigning by students and workers bosses agreed to the discretionary pay supplement.

**Public trains would be much cheaper**

SEASON TICKETS could be 10 percent cheaper by 2017 if rail services were run by the public sector, according to new research published by the Action for Rail campaign.

It said if the contracts for 11 train lines up for renewal between 2015 and 2020 were publicly run an estimated £1.5 billion could be saved.

Some £520 million could be invested alone from private shareholder dividends.

## HEALTH WORKERS



PORTERS AND their supporters rallied in Dundee last Saturday

PICTURE: CARLO MORELLI

# Tayside NHS porters launch all-out strike

AROUND 300 people joined a march and rally in support of hospital porters at Ninewells and Victoria Hospitals in Dundee last Saturday. The porters began an indefinite strike on Tuesday of this week.

Solidarity and common struggle in the fight for decent pay was the theme of the rally.

There were speakers from different unions, including from the Glasgow Homeless Caseworkers strike (see page 20).

The porters fighting against the refusal by NHS Tayside to address their claim of historical misgrading and underpayment.

The dispute flows from local implementation of the health service's Agenda for Change grading mechanism.

Around 120 porters believe they are victims of unfair implementation of the scheme that saw them be the only porters in Scotland on grade 1, while others are on grade 2.

The Unite union members welcome solidarity from the wider movement and are prepared to send delegations across the country to raise support.

Unite recently fought off moves by bosses to go to court to try and have the strike ruled illegal.

The employer has refused to negotiate and has been trying to organise a scabbing operation to undermine the strike.

**Discourage**

In a staggering twist, leaders of the local Unison union health branch have lined up with management in attacking the strikers. They even used Unison regional health committee to try to discourage other Unison members and branches from supporting the strike.

But health workers in Unison argued against their branch

position and defied it to join other local Unison branches at the rally.

There is evidence there is some employer collusion with the SNP Scottish government.

Local MSP and Scottish health minister Shona Robison had alluded to knowledge of the Unison position in a meeting with strikers before it had become public.

Yet there was no evidence of SNP support at Saturday's rally, in Dundee, the Yes City of last year's referendum campaign.

Local Unison activist and Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition candidate, Jim McFarlane, spoke at the rally.

He argued for a struggle against the austerity peddled by the Tories but implemented by the SNP Scottish government and both SNP and Labour councils.

●For more info see **Support Ninewells Porters** on Facebook

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## Workers oppose pay cuts

REFUSE LORRY drivers in Barking and Dagenham, east London, struck for two days from Tuesday of this week against council bosses' plans to slash their pay by £1,000 a year.

But workers are also striking over health and safety concerns. The GMB union members struck for three days last month.

A striker told Socialist Worker, "Management want to cut our 'pre start' times, when we do health and safety checks on our lorries.

"You just can't do a 'pre start' on a dust cart in 15 minutes—you need at least 30."

Bosses refuse to budge but support is coming in.

"We've had solidarity from GMB branches across



On strike last month

Britain," he said.

Teachers in Langdon School, East Ham, collected £36 for the strike fund.

"We're all suffering the same attacks at work—and it's good to see a group of workers fighting back," one NUT union member told Socialist Worker.

●Send messages of support to [gmb@gmbbarkingb10.org.uk](mailto:gmb@gmbbarkingb10.org.uk)

## BROMLEY

## Fighting Tory privatisation

MEMBERS OF the Unite union at Tory-run Bromley Council in south London held two days of strikes from Tuesday of this week.

The workers are opposing privatisation of services, cuts to pay and conditions and attacks on union facility time.

Unite accused the council of wanting "to privatise everything it does not have a legal duty to provide directly".

Despite holding around £130 million in reserves the

Tories plan to farm out most council services and outsource around 90 percent of 3,000 staff. Unite regional officer Onay Kasab said, "We believe that private outsourcing companies would then employ staff on much reduced pay and terms and conditions."

Workers took selective action at different times in libraries, adult services and parks.

A one-hour strike involving all staff was set for Wednesday of this week.

## ANTI-FASCISM

## Racist Pegida flops again

by TOMÁŠ TENGYEVANS

AROUND 300 people opposed the racist Pegida UK group in Whitehall, central London, last Saturday. The protest was called by Unite Against Fascism (UAF).

Pegida UK were hoping to ape the success of the Islamophobic group in Germany, which has mobilised thousands.

But anti-fascists outnumbered them. There were around 70 Nazis on the Pegida UK protest.

Nik from London told Socialist Worker, "Pegida might be careful about how they phrase things, but it's clear who they are in reality. They're trying to give a lead and scoop up the smaller groups since we beat back the EDL."

Nazis Britain First and the English Defence League (EDL) also staged a protest outside Regent's Park Mosque in central London on Friday of last week.

●The EDL plan to protest in Walthamstow, north east London, 9 May. For more information see **Counter demonstration to the visit of EDL** on Facebook



Opposing the racist Pegida

■SOME 300 anti-fascists outnumbered 100 members of the racist EDL in Oxford last Saturday.

The counter-demonstration was called by UAF and supported by local unions.

■AROUND 100 local people attended a Love Mill Road Hate Racism picnic in Cambridge last Saturday.

The event was organised by UAF in solidarity with a local Muslim woman who was verbally racially abused in the same park. She said the event restored her faith in the Cambridge community.

## OBITUARY

**Abdul Omer Mohsin 1952-2015**

ABDUL ARRIVED in Britain on a stretcher, a starved four stone wreck after the defeat of the Sudanese Communist Party in the 1970s.

He had been a student organiser for the party and was part of a student uprising that was crushed. He was tortured by the police.

Abdul was a man of considerable audacity, skill and experience.

He became a bus driver in Harrow and it was not long before he won the position of Unite union rep.

Very quickly he organised the branch, involving the other drivers.

He understood the importance of fighting and winning on seemingly minor issues like facilities for prayers and meal breaks, as well as major issues like wage equality.



Abdul on the picket line

Abdul stood out among bus reps as a fighter, always wanting to have a go, even if sometimes it might not be the best thing to do.

He joined the Socialist Workers Party he said, because the comrade standing outside his garage week after week selling Socialist Worker and giving out leaflets reminded him of himself in his youth.

When Nazis tried to protest in Harrow he mobilised bus workers to join the anti-

fascist demonstration in their uniforms.

It was a great example of how to organise joint action. Before long he faced opposition from management and he was victimised.

The process of industrial tribunal hearings and securing support from Unite exhausted him and took their toll.

Abdul suffered a heart attack followed by the loss of kidney function and suffered increasing ill health until last week when he passed away.

He studied engineering and during his illness returned to another passion. He designed and tried to create an interest in his schemes for harnessing tidal power.

This is what was so important about Abdul—to the end he was always a fighter, not just for better conditions in the daily grind of our working lives, but also to build a better world for us all.

Roger and Sarah Cox



## THE POLICE

# Protest demands justice after Henry Hicks' death

by NICK CLARK

**MORE THAN 1,000** people marched through north London on Saturday of last week demanding justice for Henry Hicks, who died as police chased him.

Henry, who was just 18 years old, died in a crash in December last year after police in unmarked cars chased him on his moped.

The Independent Police Complaints Commission has served four police officers with gross misconduct notices. Police have not explained why they were following Henry.

Henry's dad David led the march. He told Socialist Worker, "My son was killed by four Metropolitan Police officers in two unmarked police cars.

"He had no convictions—he had never been in a police station in his life. But he got hounded and harassed for three years. He got stopped and searched 156 times.

"They won't tell me why they chased him. I need some answers."

The marchers held a sit-down protest and chanted "police killed Henry Hicks" outside Islington police station.

Henry's family asked for a superintendent or borough commander to speak to them, but were told none were available.

The march finished at a mural painted for Henry on the road where he crashed.

Henry's sister Claudia also led the march. She told Socialist Worker, "My whole family is completely heartbroken.

"We built the march just on social



PROTESTERS SAT down in the road

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

media. So you can see from how many people were on the march that he meant something to people."

Claudia also said that she wanted to link up with other families fighting for justice against the police.

She said, "We want to join up with other families who have had family members killed by the police so we're not just alone.

"It's not just us—it's happening to

so many people. Something needs to be done about it."

She added, "A lot of people have never had any justice for what the police have done to their families.

"Maybe if we got some for ours, it would mean something to them as well. Someone needs to be held responsible for all these deaths."

●Go to **Justice for Henry Hicks** on Facebook

## INQUEST

## Kingsley Burrell inquest opens

**THE INQUEST** into the death of Kingsley Burrell in 2011 began on Tuesday of this week.

The 29 year old died in Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Four days earlier he had called 999 to report that he was being harassed by a gang while out with his five year old son.

The police took him into custody and he was detained in a mental health unit before being transferred to the hospital where he died.

The Crown Prosecution Service found there was "insufficient evidence" to charge any of 12 people with Kingsley's death.

They included four West Midlands police officers, two West Midlands ambulance staff, three nurses and three doctors.

Kingsley's family have fought for four years to get an inquest into his death, and are urging supporters to attend the hearing which is set to last for six weeks.

●HM Coroner's Court, 50 Newton Street, Birmingham B4 6NE



Kingsley Burrell

## STUDENTS

## UAL occupation

## Occupying over Easter

STUDENT occupations at different London universities have continued through the Easter break.

Occupations at University of Arts London (UAL) and Goldsmith's were still ongoing as Socialist Worker went to press.

But occupiers at London School of Economics and King's College were forced to evacuate due to a nearby fire. Students at both universities say they plan to re-occupy soon.

All four occupations are demanding the abolition of tuition fees and more student involvement in the running of the universities.

Occupiers at UAL's Central St Martin's Campus are also fighting cuts to foundation courses.

UAL students staged a protest outside the campus in Camberwell on Thursday of last week.

University management responded by closing campuses and studios and restricting students' access to facilities.

Members of all four occupations were set to meet on Tuesday of this week to discuss their next steps.

●UAL students have set up a fighting fund and are asking for donations.

gofundme.com/occupyual

PICTURE: OCCUPY UAL

## PRIVATISATION

## National Gallery workers plan next move

**WORKERS AT** the National Gallery in London are planning further action against privatisation plans.

Bosses want to privatise 400 out of 600 jobs. So far workers have taken 17 days of strikes.

The tendering process is set to begin just days before the general election in May—and workers say there will be further strikes before then.

As Socialist Worker went to press workers were set to meet to formally decide on dates.

Bosses have gone on the offensive during the dispute. They have suspended PCS union rep Candy Udwin—and threatened more workers with action over "intimidation" during strikes.

But Candy and the workers have received support from trade unionists and activists across the country.

A fringe meeting on fighting austerity at the NUT union conference (see page 7) gave its backing to Candy last weekend. The meeting was called by left wing groups in the union.

Candy spoke about the fight by National Gallery workers to stop privatisation.

She said, "Our society is failing on all sorts of counts. But on our side, people have shown a great deal of courage and resistance."

The meeting raised nearly £270 for the strike fund.

Deputy general secretary of the NUT, Kevin

Courtney, said Candy is an "inspiration". He told the meeting, "Candy goes from fight to fight. Not because she wants to fight but because she can't stand the injustice."

Kevin said it is possible to build campaigns against victimisations and other attacks.

He referred to Candy's previous victimisation at University College Hospital (UCH), when Kevin was teaching in Camden, north London. "We struck when Candy was victimised in UCH," he said.

"People say strikes aren't popular—but it was incredibly popular. We marched with parents to say we defend our hospital."

Annette Mackin

## TRANSPORT

## London's bus companies agree to talks

**BUS DRIVERS** in London could be striking again soon if talks fail between Transport for London (TfL), bus operators and the Unite union. The talks are set for Thursday of this week.

Drivers at the capital's 18 bus operators struck twice earlier this year demanding an end to unequal pay and sector wide negotiations.

After months of the employers refusing to talk action by the drivers and pressure from their union has at least forced the bosses and TfL to sit round the table.

If nothing progresses from the talks more strikes will need to be called to rebuild the momentum lost since the last strike in February.

## PACKAGING



Pickets at Smurfit Kappa

PICTURE: KATE HUNTER

**WORKERS AT** corrugated packaging company Smurfit Kappa in Northampton held a solid two-day walkout last week in defence of two sacked senior shop stewards.

The Unite union members also began an overtime ban.

Unite regional officer Mick Orpin said, "It can be argued that this is a direct attack on our stewards and the fabric of our union."

He said the stewards were "instrumental" in bringing

a claim over the incorrect payment of a bonus, and in resisting new contracts. These would have led to a two-tier workforce.

The outcome of a reps meeting in London, which hoped to escalate the dispute nationally, was unclear as Socialist Worker went to press.

But workers have agreed a further four days of action to include the weekend shift. They demand their reps are reinstated.



# CARE STRIKERS WANT RESPECT

by RAYMIE KIERNAN

**THE INDEFINITE** strike of homelessness caseworkers in Glasgow is going strong as it enters its second week—and solidarity is boosting their determination to win.

“We’re getting messages from all over Britain and beyond,” Unison union rep Stuart said. “We’re really motivated and up for this.”

The workers are in dispute with Labour-run city council bosses over pay grading.

Fiona, a striker from the south of the city, told Socialist Worker, “We’ve exhausted the grievance procedures, so were left with no choice but to strike.”

Some 70 Unison members, out of a team of 75 workers, walked out on Tuesday of last week demanding council bosses recognise the job they do.

Only management believe their grade is “appropriate”.

Fiona said, “Social work colleagues are horrified to learn we are a grade below them. We manage huge case-loads but the work we do is not being acknowledged.”

The difference between the grades is up to £5,000 a



**THE HOMELESSNESS** caseworkers in Glasgow say their wage doesn't recognise their work

PICTURES: DUNCAN BROWN

year. “They’ve got away with it for far too long—but no more,” said Fiona.

Solidarity messages have poured in, including from the FBU union in Scotland. Postal workers have refused to cross picket lines.

Strikers spoke at a rally of hospital porters (see page 18)

in Dundee last Saturday and are keen to make links with other workers.

Around 120 strikers and supporters rallied outside the council’s headquarters on Thursday of last week.

Homelessness charity Shelter Scotland workers joined them and pledged

to organise a workplace collection for the strike fund.

One former service user addressed the crowd. He said, “I was a dead man walking and probably wouldn’t be here today if it were not for these workers. Victory to your strike.”

Senior managers have

been drafted in to cope. A skeleton staff of just 12 team leaders and five workers, who are not part of the Unison dispute, are left to run the service.

It deals with 3,000 homeless cases at any one time.

Stuart asked, “If there’s no statutory service in place and

## SOLIDARITY

**How you can help the strikers win their fight**

● See Glasgow Homeless Caseworkers Strike on Facebook

● To request a striker to speak at your union branch or campaign meeting and send messages of support to enquiries@glasgowcityunison.co.uk

● Send strike fund donations to Glasgow City Unison, 84 Bell St, Glasgow G1 1LQ

a household needs to access the service, who is taking responsibility for that?”

Workers know they are in for the long haul but are prepared to keep fighting.

As Fiona said, “It’s not unreasonable to want to be paid for the work you do.”

She also said the solidarity strikers have received is boosting them. “It’s great to feel we are not alone—it strengthens our resolve.”

## On other pages

How the rich run Britain  
>>> Pages 14&15

## Thousands march in Glasgow against replacing Trident nuclear weapons

UP TO 8,000 people joined a Scrap Trident march in Glasgow on Saturday of last week. It was one of the biggest marches against nuclear weapons in Scotland for many years.

Their main slogan was “Bairns not bombs” and chants of “Welfare not warfare” rang out.

The main Westminster parties are committed to spending £100 billion on replacing Trident while slashing public spending.

Student Lotte told Socialist Worker, “A lot of people don’t like Trident and want to get rid of



The Scrap Trident march on Saturday of last week

it. Instead of the money being wasted it could be spent on education, the NHS or childcare.”

Marchers carried placards against the Saudi Arabia-led assault on Yemen, against Nato or simply reading “Hope over Fear”.

Nicola Sturgeon, Scottish National Party (SNP) leader and Scottish first minister, told the rally the SNP’s pledge to scrap Trident was a “red line” it would not cross to support a Labour government.

Other speakers included leader of Scottish Greens Patrick Harvie, Labour MP

Katy Clark and Scottish TUC assistant secretary Anne Henderson.

Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) supporters joined the march, as did contingents of the Green Party and SNP. Independence campaigners were also out

in force. Paul Anderson said he joined the march “to support the main thrust of independence and bring us towards a more socialist society”. Thanks to Euan Mitchell

Longer report online at socialistworker.co.uk/art/40274/T

## GET INVOLVED

**Two other big anti-Trident mobilisations are planned on Monday of next week**

● Big Blockade of Faslane naval base near Glasgow. Details at scraptrident.org

● Vote out Trident—party and protest at the Ministry of Defence on Whitehall in central London. 6-8pm. For more details go to cnduk.org